# My Cosmopolitan Year

By the author of "Mastering Flame"

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# MY COSMOPOLITAN YEAR

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"MASTERING FLAME"

WITH NINETEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

MILLS & BOON, LIMITED
49 RUPERT STREET
LONDON, W.

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TO

MY FATHER

FROM WHOM I HAVE THE

DELIGHTS AND LASTING RICHES

OF MANY A COSMOPOLITAN YEAR

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# *PROLOGUE*

*A* PLAY *is a play in so much as it furnishes a fragment of actual life. Being only a fragment, and thus literally torn out of the mass of life, it is bound to be sketchy; to a certain extent even superficial. Particularly is this the case where the scene shifts between five places radically different in elements and ideals. The author can only present the (to him) most impressive aspects of the several pictures, trusting to his sincerity to bridge the gaps his enforced brevity must create. And first he invites you to look at the piece in rehearsal.*

# IN REHEARSAL (NEW YORK)

## I

### THE CAST

ACCORDING to Webster, a cosmopolitan is "a citizen of the world." According to popular conception, he is a person who can find his way to the chief restaurants and variety theatres of several capital cities, and order a meal or buy a ticket after he arrives. He speaks all *table d'hôte* languages, and is not afraid to look the waiter in the eye.

As such a master internationalist, I humbly confess I cannot qualify. I have an abject intimidation of waiters, and I can no more decipher a German menu than I can a Javanese. My policy in visiting strange countries is to seize on one where I have amiable friends, and to attach myself to them shamelessly, while they brandish the local idiom and show me things. So that, far from being a citizen of the world, I am only its country cousin —up to town for a gracious glimpse of the maze of life through certain peep-holes.

Thanks to the promoters of *opéra bouffe*, we are accustomed as a universe to screw our eye to a single spot in the curtain that conceals a nation, and innocently to accept what we see therefrom as typical of the entire people. Thus England is generally supposed to be inhabited by a blond youth with a top-hat on the back of his head, and a large *boutonnière* overwhelming his morning-coat. He carries a stick, and says "Ah," and is invariably strolling along Piccadilly. In France, the youth has grown into a bad, bold man of thirty—a *boulevardier* of course—whose features consist of a pair of inky moustaches and a wicked leer. He sits at a table and drinks absinthe, and watches the world go by. The world is never by chance engaged elsewhere; it obligingly continues to go by.

Spain has a rose over her ear, and listens with patience to a perpetual guitar; Austria for ever is waltzing upstairs; while America is known to be populated by a sandy-haired person of no definite age or embellishments, who spends his time in the alternate amusements of tripling his fortune and ejaculating "I guess!" He has a white marble mansion on Fifth Avenue, and an office in Wall Street, where daily he corners cotton or sugar or crude oil—as the fancy strikes him. And he is bounded on every side by sky-scrapers.

Like most widely accepted notions, this is pictur-

esque but untrue. The Americans of America, or at least the New Yorkers of New York, are not the handful of men cutting off coupons in mahogany offices "down-town"; nor the silken, sacheted women gliding in and out of limousines, with gold purses. They are the swarm of shop-keepers and "specialists," mechanics and small retailers, newspaper reporters and petty clerks, who flood the subways and elevated railways morning and night, fighting like savages for a seat. They are the army of tailors' and shirt-makers' and milliners' girls, who daily pour through the cross-streets, to and from their sordid work; they are the palely determined hordes who batter at the artistic door of the city, and live on nothing a week. They are the vast troops of creatures born under a dozen different flags, whom the city has seduced with her golden wand, whom she has prostituted to her own greed, whom she will shortly fling away as worthless scrap —and who love her with a passion that is the root and fibre of their souls.

So much for the actual New Yorker, as contrasted with the gilded nonentity of musical comedy and best-selling fiction. As for New York itself, it has the appearance of "behind the scenes" at a gigantic theatre. Coming into the harbour is like entering the house of a great lady by the back door. Jagged rows of match-like buildings present their blank rear

walls to the river, or form lurid bills of advertisement for somebody's pork and beans; huge barns of ferry terminuses overlap with their galleries the narrow streets beneath; slim towers shoot up, giddy and dazzling-white, in the midst of grimy tenements and a hideous black network of elevated railways; the domes of churches and of pickle factories, the turrets of prisons and of terra-cotta hotels, the vast electric signs of theatres and of cemetery companies, are mingled indiscriminately in a vast, hurled-together heap. While everywhere great piles of stone and steel are dizzily jutting skyward, ragged and unfinished.

It is plain to be seen that here life is in preparation—a piece in rehearsal; with the scene-shifters a bit scarce, or untutored in their business. One has the uncomfortable sensation of having been in too great haste to call, and so caught the haughty city on her moving-in day. This breeds humility in the visitor, and indulgence for the poor lady who is doing her best to set her house to rights. It is a splendid house, and a distinctly clever lady; and certainly in time they will adjust themselves to one another and to the world outside. For the present they loftily enjoy a gorgeous chaos.

Into this the stranger is landed summarily, and with no pause of railway journey before he attacks the city. London, Paris, Madrid may discreetly

withdraw a hundred miles or more farther from the impatient foreigner; New York confronts him brusquely on the pier. And from his peaceful cabin he is plunged into a vortex of hysterical reunions, rushing porters, lordly Customs officials, newspaper men, express-agents, boot-blacks and boys shouting "Tel-egram!" He has been on the dock only five minutes when he realizes that the dock itself is unequivocally, uncompromisingly New York.

Being New York, it has at once all the conveniences and all the annoyances known to man, there at his elbow. One can talk by long distance-telephone from the pier to any part of the United States; or one can send a "day letter" or a "night letter" by telegraph and be sure of its delivery in any part of the three-thousand mile continent, by eight o'clock next morning. One can check one's trunks, when they have passed the Customs, direct to one's residence—whether it be Fifth Avenue, New York, or Nob Hill, San Francisco; time, distance, the clumsiness of inanimate things, all are dissipated before the eyes of the dazzled stranger.

On the other hand, before even he has set foot on American soil, he becomes acquainted with characteristic American arrogance, American indifference, the fantasy of American democracy.

The national attitude of I-am-as-good-as-you-are has been conveyed to him through the surly answers of the porter, the cheerful familiarity of the Customs examiner, the grinning impudence of the express-man. These excellent public servants would have the foreigner know once and for all that he is in a land where all men are indisputably proven free and equal every minute. The extremely interesting fact that all men are most unequal—slaves to their own potentialities—has still to occur to the American. He is in the stage of doing, not yet of thinking; therefore he finds disgrace in saying "sir" to another man, but none in showing him rudeness.

In a civilization like that of America, where the office-boy of to-day is the millionaire of to-morrow, and the millionaire of to-day to-morrow will be begging a job, there cannot exist the hard-and-fast lines which in older worlds definitely fix one man as a gentleman, another as his servant. Under this management of lightning changes, the most insignificant of the chorus nurses (and with reason) the belief that he may be jumped overnight into the leading rôle. There is something rather fine in the desperate self-confidence of every man in the ultimate rise of his particular star. Out of it, I believe, grows much of that feverish activity which every visitor to New York records among his first

impressions. One has barely arrived, and been whirled from the dock into the roar and rush of Twenty-third Street and Broadway, when he begins to realize the relentless energy of the place.

The very wind sweeps along the tunnel-like streets, through the rows of monster buildings, with a speed that takes the breath. In the fiercest of the gale, at the intersection of the two great thoroughfares of Fifth Avenue and Broadway, rises the solid, serene bulk of the Flatiron Building—like a majestic Winged Victory breasting the storm. Over to the right, in Madison Square, Metropolitan Tower rears its disdainful white loftiness; far above the dusky gold and browns of the old Madison Square Garden —home of the famous New York Horse Show; above the dwarfed Manhattan Club, the round Byzantine dome of Dr. Parkhurst's Church. But the Flatiron itself has the proudest site in New York: facing, to the north, on one side the tangle and turmoil of Broadway—its unceasing whirr of business, business, business; on the other side, the broad elegance and dignity of Fifth Avenue, with its impressive cavalcade of mounted police. While east and west, before this giant building, rush the trams and traffic of important Twenty-third Street; and to the south lie the arches of aristocratic old Washington Square.

It is as though, at this converging point, one gathered together all the outstanding threads in the

fabric of the city, to visualize its central pattern. And the outstanding types of the city here are gathered also. One sees the ubiquitous "business-man," in his careful square-shouldered clothes, hurrying from bus to tram, or tearing down-town in a taxi; the almost ubiquitous business-woman, trig and quietly self-confident, on her brisk up-town walk to the office; and the out-of-town woman "shopper," with her enormous hand-bag, and the anxious-eyed Hebrew "Importer" (whose sign reads *Maison Marcel*), and his stunted little errand-girl darting through the maze of traffic like a fish through well-known waters; the idle young spark-about-town, immortalized in the sock and collar advertisements of every surface car and subway; and the equally idle young girl, in her elaborate sameness the prototype of the same cover of the best magazines: even in one day there comes to be a strange familiarity about all these people.

They are peculiar to their own special class, but within that class they are as like as peas in a pod. They have the same features, wear the same clothes even to a certain shade, and do the same things in identically the same way. With all about them shifting, progressing, altering from hour to hour, New Yorkers *in themselves* remain unaltered. Or, if they change, they change together as one creature —be he millionaire or Hebrew shop-keeper, doctor

of divinity or manager of comic opera. For, of all men under the sun, the New Yorker is a type; acutely suspicious of, and instinctively opposed to, anything independent of the type. Hence, in spite of the vast numbers of different peoples brought together on Manhattan Island, we find not a community of Americans growing cosmopolitan, but a community of cosmopolitans forced to grow New York. This, under the potent influence of extreme American adaptibility, they do in a remarkably short time; the human potpourri who five years ago had never seen Manhattan, to-day being indistinguishable in the representative city mass.

Walk out Fifth Avenue at the hour of afternoon parade, or along Broadway on a matinée day: the habitués of the two promenades differ only in degree. Broadway is blatant. Fifth Avenue is desperately toned-down. On Broadway, voices and millinery are a few shades more strident, self-assertion a few shades more arrogant than on the less ingenuous Avenue. Otherwise, what do you find? The same over-animated women, the same over-languid young girls; wearing the same velvets and furs and huge corsage bouquets, and—unhappily—the same pearl powder and rouge, whether they be sixteen or sixty, married or demoiselle. Ten years ago New York could boast the loveliest naturally beautiful galaxy of young girls in the world; to-day, since the onslaught

of French fashions and artificiality, this is no longer true. On the other hand, it is pitiable to see the hard painted lines and fixed smile of the woman of the world in the faces of these girls of seventeen and eighteen who walk up and down the Avenue day after day, to stare and be stared at with all the boldness of a boulevard *trotteuse*.

Foreigners who watch them from club windows write enthusiastic eulogies in their praise. To me they seem a terrible travesty on all that youth is meant to be. They take their models from pictures of French *demi-mondaines* shown in ultra-daring race costumes in the Sunday newspapers, and whom they fondly believe to be great ladies of society. I had almost said that from head to foot they are victims of an entirely false conception of real beauty and grace; but when it comes to their feet, they are genuine-American, and so frank and attractive. Indeed, there is no woman as daintily and appropriately shod as the American woman, whose trim short skirts betray this pleasant fact with every step she takes.

Nowhere, however, is appearance and its detail more misrepresentative than in New York. Strangers exclaim at the opulence of the frocks and furs displayed by even the average woman. They have no idea that the average woman lives in a two-by-four hall-bedroom—or at best a three-room flat;

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THE AFTERNOON PARADE ON FIFTH AVENUE.

and that she has saved and scrimped, or more probably gone into debt, to acquire that one indispensable good costume. Nor could they imagine that her chief joy in a round of sordid days, is to parade that costume as one of the luxurious throng that crowd Fifth Avenue and its adjacent tea-rooms from four till six every afternoon.

Not only the women of Manhattan itself revel in this daily scene, but their neighbours from Brooklyn, Staten Island, Jersey City, and Newark pour in by the hundreds from the underground tubes and the ferries that connect these places with New York. The whole *raison d'être* of countless women and girls who live within an hour's distance of the city is this everyday excursion to their Mecca: the leisurely stroll up Fifth Avenue from Twenty-third Street, down from Fifty-ninth; the cup of tea at one of the rococo hotels along the way. As my acute New York host said to me, "It is a routine of which they never seem to tire—a monotony always new to them. And the pathetic part of it is that while they all—the indigent East Siders, the anxious suburbanites, and the floating fraction of tourists from the West and South—fondly imagine they are beholding the four hundred of New York society, they are simply staring at each other!"

And accepting each other naïvely at their

clothes value. The woman of the hall-bedroom receives the same appreciative glance as the woman with a bank account of five figures; provided that outwardly she has achieved the same result. The prime mania of New York is results—or what appear to be results. Every sky-scraper in itself is an exclamation-point of accomplishment. And the matter is not how one accomplishes, but how much; so that the more sluggish European can feel the minutes being snatched and squeezed by these determined people round him, and made to yield their very utmost before allowed to pass into telling hours and days.

With this goes an air of almost offensive competency—an air that is part of the garments of a true New Yorker; as though he and he alone can compass the affair towards which he is for ever hurrying. There is about him, always, the piquant insinuation that he is keeping some one waiting; that he can. I have been guilty of suspecting that this attitude, together with his painstakingly correct clothes, constitute the chief elements in the New Yorker's game of "bluff." Let him wear what Americans describe as "snappy" clothes, and he is at once respected as successful. A man may be living on one meal a day, but if he can contrive a prosperous appearance, together with the preoccupied air of having more business than he can

attend to, he is in the way of being begged to accept a position at any moment.

No one is so ready to be "bluffed" as the American who spends his life "bluffing." In him are united the extremes of ingenuousness and shrewdness; so that often, through pretending to be something he is not, he does actually come to be it. A Frenchman or a German or an Englishman is born a barber; he remains a barber and dies a barber, like his father and grandfather before him. His one idea is to be the best barber he can be; to excel every other barber in his street. The American scorns such lack of "push." If his father is a barber, he himself learns barbering only just well enough to make a living while he looks for a "bigger job." His mind is not on pleasing his clients, but on himself—five, ten, twenty years hence.

He sees himself as confidential clerk, then manager's assistant, then manager of an independent business—soap, perhaps; he sees himself taken into partnership, his wife giving dinners, his children sent to college. And so vivid are these possibilities to him, reading and hearing of like histories every day in the newspapers and on the street, that unconsciously he begins to affect the manners and habits of the class he intends to make his own. In an astonishingly short time they are his own;

which means that he has taken the main step towards the realization of his dream. It is the outward and visible signs of belonging which eventually bring about that he does belong; and no one is quicker to grasp this than the obscure American himself. He has the instincts of the born climber. He never stops imitating until he dies; and by that time his son is probably governor of the State, and his daughter married to a title. What people! As a Frenchman has put it, "*il n'y a que des phenomènes!*"

One cannot conclude an introductory sketch of some of their phenomena without a brief glance at their amazing architecture. The first complacent question of the newspaper interviewer to every foreigner is, "What do you think of our sky-scrapers?" And one is certainly compelled to do a prodigious deal of thinking about them, whether he will or no. For they are being torn down and hammered up higher, all over New York, till conversation to be carried on in the street must needs become a dialogue in monosyllabic shouts; while walking, in conjunction with the upheavals of new subway tunnelling, has all the excitements of traversing an earthquake district.

This perpetual transition finds its motive in the enormous business concentrated on the small island of Manhattan, and the constant increase in office

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A PATCH OF THE CRAZY-QUILT BROADWAY, FROM 42ND STREET.

space demanded thereby. The commerce of the city persistently moves north, and up, and the residents flee before the invasion, leaving their fine old Knickerbocker homes to be converted into great department stores, publishing houses, but above all into the omnivorous office-building. The mass of these are hideous—dizzy, squeezed-together abortions of brick and steel; but here and there among the horrors are to be found examples of true, if fantastic, beauty. The Flatiron Building is one, the Woolworth Building (especially in its marvellous illumination by night) another, the new colonnaded offices of the Grand Central Station a third. Yet the general impression of New York architecture upon the average foreigner is of illimitable confusion and ugliness.

It is because the American in art is a Futurist. He so far scorns the ideal as to have done with imagination altogether; substituting for it an invention so titanic in audacity that, to the untrained, it appears grotesque. In place of the ideal he has set up the one thing greater, Truth. And as truth to every man is different (only standard being relatively fixed), how can he hope for concurrence in his masterpiece? The sky-scraper is more than a masterpiece: it is a fact. A fact of violence, of grim struggle, and of victory: over the earth that is too small, and the winds that rage in impotence,

and the heavens that heretofore have been useless. It is the accomplished fact of man's dauntless determination to wrest from the elements that which he sees he needs; and as such it has a beauty too terrible to be described.

## II

### "CONVENIENCE *V.* CULTURE"

HERE are the two prime motives waging war for supremacy in the American drama of to-day. Time is money; whether for the American it is to mean anything more is still a question. Meanwhile, every time-saving convenience that can be invented is put at his disposal, be he labouring-man or President. And, as we have seen in the case of the sky-scraper, little or no heed is paid to the form or finish of the invention; its sole beauty is its practicability for immediate and exhaustive use.

Take that most useful of all, for example, the hotel. An Englishman goes to a hotel when he is obliged to, and then chooses the quietest he can find. Generally it has the appearance of a private house, all but the discreet brass plate on the door. One rings for a servant to admit one; meals are served in one's rooms, and weeks can go by without one's seeing another guest in the house. The idea is to make the hotel in as far as possible duplicate the home.

In America it is the other way round: the New

Yorker in particular models his home after his hotel, and seizes every opportunity to close his own house and live for weeks at a time in one of the huge caravanseries that gobble up great areas of the city. "It is so convenient," he tells you, leading the way into the lobby of one of these hideous terra-cotta structures. "No servant problem, no house-keeping worries for Madame, and everything we want within reach of the telephone bell!"

Quite true, when the pompadoured princess below-stairs condescends to answer it. Otherwise you may sit in impotent rage, ten storeys up, while she finishes a twenty-minute conversation with her "friend" or arranges to go to a "show" with the head barber; for in all this palace of marble staircases and frescoed ceilings, Louis Quinze suites and Russian baths, there is not an ordinary bell in the room to call a servant. Everything must be ordered by telephone; and what boots it that there is a telegraph office, a stock exchange bureau, a ladies' outfitting shop, a railroad agency, a notary, a pharmacopolist, and an osteopath in the building —if to control these conveniences one must wander through miles of corridors, and be shot up and down a dozen lifts, because the telephone girl refuses to answer?

From personal experience I should say that the servant problem is quite as tormenting in hotels as

in all other American establishments. The condescension of these worthies, when they deign to supply you with some simple want, is amazing. Not only in hotels, but in well-run private houses, they seize every chance for conversation; and always turn to the subject of their own affairs—their former prosperity, the mere temporary necessity of their being in service, and their glowing prospects for the future. They insist on giving you their confidential opinion of the establishment in which you are a guest, and which is inevitably far inferior to others in which they have been employed. They comment amiably on your garments, if they are pleased with them, or are quite as ready to convey that they are not. And woe to him who shows resentment! He may beseech their services henceforth in vain. If, however, he meekly accepts them as they are, they will graciously be pleased to perform for him the duties for which they are paid fabulous wages.

Hotel servants constitute the aristocracy among "domestics," as they prefer to call themselves; just as hotel dwellers—of the more luxurious type—constitute a kind of aristocracy among third-rate society in New York. These people lead a strange, unreal sort of existence, living as it were in a thickly gilded, thickly padded vacuum, whence they issue periodically into the hands of a retinue

of hangers-on: hairdressers, manicures, masseurs; and for the men a train of speculators and sporting parasites. In this world there are no fixed hours for anything; breakfast overlaps lunch, lunch runs on into tea, and dinner takes place at the supper hour—or not at all. Order of any sort is unknown, and the only activity of this large class of wealthy people is a hectic, unregulated striving after pleasure. Women especially grow into hotel fungi of the most torpid kind, sitting about the hot, over-decorated lobbies and in the huge crowded restaurants, with nothing to do but stare and be stared at. They are a curious by-product of rushing, all-accomplishing American life in general; and one thinks there might be salvation for them in the "house-keeping worries" they disdainfully repudiate.

But there is no doubt that with the serious problems of servants and high prices generally, a home is much more difficult to maintain in America than it is in England; which explains the ingrained habit there of living in apartment hotels or flats. Very many people, however, prefer to have their houses out of town on Long Island or up the Hudson, and to come in by train or motor for business or other necessities. The country houses in America are charming, the Colonial style of most of them lending itself admirably to the simple, well-kept lawns and old-fashioned gardens round about.

One misses the dignity of ancient stone and trees, but one gains the airy space and many conveniences of modern comfort.

As hosts, Americans are inclined to be extremely hospitable; foreigners have been known to laugh at them for their over-assiduousness in entertaining guests. This is not only ungrateful, but stupid; as it is obviously finer to err on the side of the over-courteous than — as do many English and Continental people—on the side of the over-casual. For myself, I have had delightful experience of the cordiality of all classes of Americans,—from the George Greys of Fifth Avenue to the John Browns of Harlem.

No one outside of America has heard of Harlem. Does the loyal Englishman abroad speak of Hammersmith? Does the Frenchman *en voyage* descant on the beauties of the Batignolles? These abominations are locked within the national bosom under jealous key; only Hyde Park, the Champs Élysées, and Fifth Avenue are allowed out for alien gaze. Yet quite as emphatic of New York struggle and achievement as the few score millionaire palaces along the Avenue, are the tens of thousands of cramped Harlem flats that overspread the northern end of the Island, from 125th Street to the Bronx.

For tens of thousands of John Browns have daily to wage war in the deadly field of American

commercial competition in order to pay the rent and the gas bill, and the monthly instalment on the furniture of these miniature homes. They have not, however, to pay for the electric light, or the hot water heating, or a dozen other comforts which are a recurring source of amazement to the foreigner in such a place. For twenty dollars a month John Brown and his wife are furnished not only with three rooms and a luxurious porcelain bath in a white-tiled bathroom; but also the use of two lifts, the inexhaustible services of the janitor, a comfortable roof-garden in summer, and an imposing entrance hall downstairs, done in imitation Carrara marble and imitation Cordova leather. With this goes a still more imposing address, and Mrs. John can rouse the eternal envy of the weary Sixth Avenue shop-girl by ordering her lemon-squeezer or two yards of linoleum sent to "Marie Antoinette Court," or "The Cornwallis Arms." The shop-girl understands that Mrs. John's husband is a Success.

That is, that he earns in the neighbourhood of a hundred dollars a month. With this he can afford to pay the household expenses, to dress himself and his wife a bit better than their position demands, to subscribe to two or three of the ten-cent magazines, and to do a play on Broadway now and then. Mrs. John, of course, is a matinée fiend, and has the candy habit. These excesses must be provided for; also

John's five-cent cigars and occasional mild "spree with the boys." For the rest, they are a prudent couple: methodically religious, inordinately moral; banking a few dollars every month against the menacing rainy-day, and if this has not arrived by vacation time in August, promptly spending the money on the lurid delights of Atlantic City or some other ocean resort. Thence they return haggard but triumphant, with a coat of tan laboriously acquired by wetting faces and arms, and sitting for hours in the broiling sun — to impress the Tom Smiths in the flat next door that they have had a "perfectly grand time."

A naïve, hard-working, kindly couple these Browns of Harlem; severely conventional in their prejudices, impressionable as children in their affections, and with a certain persistent cleverness that shoots beyond the limitations of their type, and hints to them of the habits and manners of a finer. In them the passionate motive of self-development that dominates all American life has so far found an outlet only in demand for the conveniences and material comforts of the further advanced whom they imitate. When, in the natural course of things, they turn their eyes towards the culture of the Man Higher Up, they will obtain that too. And meanwhile, does not Mrs. Brown have her Tennyson Club, and John his uniform edition of Shakespeare?

Some New Yorkers who shudder at Harlem are not so lucky. I was once the guest of a lady who had just moved into her sumptuous new home on Riverside Drive—quite the most satisfactory of the residence quarters of the city, by the way, with its proud sweep of bluff above the Hudson. My rooms, to quote the first-class hotel circular, were replete with every luxury: I could turn on the light from seven different places; I could make the chairs into couches or the couches into chairs; I could talk by one of the marvellous ebony and silver telephones to the valet or the cook, or if I pleased to Chicago. There was nothing mortal man could invent that had not been put in those rooms; including six varieties of reading-lamps, and a bed-reading-table that shot out and arranged itself obligingly when one pushed a button.

But there was nothing to read. Apologetically, I sought my hostess. Would she allow me to pilfer the library? For a moment the lady looked blank. Then, with a smile of relief, she said: "Of course! You want some magazines. How stupid of the servants. I'll have them sent to you at once; but, you know, we have no library. I think books are so ugly, don't you?"

I am not hopelessly addicted to veracity, but I will set my hand and seal to this story; also to the fact that in all that palace of the superfluous

there was not, to my knowledge, one book of any sort. Even the favourite whipped-cream novel of society was wanting; but magazines of every kind and description littered the place. The reason for this apparently inexplicable state of affairs is simple: time is money; therefore not to be expended without calculation. In the magazine the rushed business-man, and the equally rushed business or society woman, has a literary quick-lunch that can be swallowed in convenient bites at odd moments during the day.

Is the business-man dining out? He looks at the reviews of books he has not read, on the way to his office in the morning; criticisms of plays he has not seen, on the way back at night. Half an hour of magazine is made thus to yield some eight hours of theatre and twenty-four of reading books—and his *vis-à-vis* at dinner records at next day's tea party, "What a well-informed man that Mr. Worriton is! He seems to find time for everything."

Is the society woman looking in at an important reception? Between a fitting at her dressmaker's, luncheon, bridge and two teas, she catches up the last review from the pocket of her limousine, and runs over the political notes, war news, foreign events of the week. Result: "That Mrs. Newrich is really a remarkable woman!" declares the dis-

tinguished guest of the reception to his hostess. "Such breadth of interest, such an intelligent outlook! It is a genuine pleasure to meet a woman who shows some acquaintance with the affairs of the day."

And so again they hoodwink one another, each practising the same deceptive game of superficial show; yet never suspecting any of the rest. And the magazine syndicates flourish and multiply. In this piece that is in preparation the cast are too busy, proving themselves capable of their parts, really to take time to become so. My friend George Grey, who writes stories for their leisure hours (when do the harassed creatures have any?), says that to succeed with them you must offer your dose in tabloids: highly concentrated essence of whatever it is, and always sugar-coated. Then they will swallow it promptly, and demand more.

George Grey should know. Five years ago he was one of the most promising of American novelists; to-day he trades in fiction. As he himself acutely sums the transformation: "They tired me out. When I started in, I had plenty of wind; but they doubled the track—and redoubled it, every time I gave them something that was literature. They don't want literature; they want excitement—of admiration, pity, the erotic and the sternly moral sense. Their nerves must be kept at a certain

perpetual tension; he who overlooks this supreme fact, in creating for them, fails."

Grey grew tired of failing—that is, of being ignored. No American, whatever his development, takes kindly to non-recognition. He abandoned literature, and set himself to learning the trade of the fictioneers. He scraped their craft to the elemental bones, and proceeded to array the skeleton with a set of new tricks—cleverer, because more startling, than any his predecessors had hit upon. In three years he was famous; in ten, close to being a millionaire. To-day, his average profits per book are fifty thousand dollars; and he turns off two a year, to say nothing of serials and short stories which fetch him fabulous prices.

There is only one George Grey, but a score of analysts almost as keen crowd him for his place. These are the Americans who have taken the one step further than their fellows, in that they are able to dissect the latter, and so pander to the established national appetites. The material result is a continuous avalanche of novels and short stories such as in a less vast and less extravagant country would ruin one another by their very multitude; but which, in America, meet with an appalling success. Appalling, because it is not a primitive but a too exotic fancy that delights in them. For his mind as well as for his body, the American demands an

overheated dwelling; when not plunged within the hectic paragraphs of a "best-seller," by way of recreation, he is apt to be immersed in the thick gilt and florid joys of a Broadway "extravaganza."

These typically American performances, of huge "beauty choruses" spread over an immense stage,—magnificent scenery, gorgeous costumes, elaborate fantasies of ballet and song,—bear the same relation to actual drama as the best-sellers do to literature, and are as popular. The Hippodrome, with its vast stage accommodating four hundred people, and its enormous central tank for water spectacles, is easily first among the extravaganza-houses of New York; its great middle-class audience, that twice daily fills the amphitheatre, being quite as interesting as the performance itself.

This bears resemblance to the French *révue* on a large scale—in other words, is a combination circus and vaudeville, held together by a thin thread of plot that permits the white-flannelled youth and bejewelled maiden who have faithfully exclaimed over each new sensation of the piece, finally to embrace one another with the original cry of "At last!" Meanwhile kangaroos engage in a boxing match, hippopotami splash most of the reservoir over "the South Sea Girls," the Monte Carlo Casino presents its hoary tables as background for the "Dance of the Jeunesse Dorée," and Maoris from

New Zealand give an imitation of an army of tarantulas writhing from one side of the stage to the other. The climax is a stupendous tableau *en pyramide* of fountains, marble staircases, gilded thrones, and opalescent canopies; built up, banked, and held together by girls of every costume and complexion. Nothing succeeds in New York without girls; the more girls, the more triumphant success. So the Hippodrome, being in every way triumphant, has mountains of them; tall girls and little girls, Spanish girls, Japanese girls, Hindoo girls, French girls; and at the very top of the peak, where the "spot" shines brightest, wrapped in the Stars and Stripes of her apotheosis: the American girl. *Ecco!* The last word has been said; applause thunders to the rafters; the flag is unfurled, to show the maiden in the victorious garb of a Captain of the Volunteers, and the curtain falls amid the lusty strains of the national anthem. Everybody goes home happy, and the box-office nets five thousand dollars. They know the value of patriotism, these good Hebrews; also the might of the commending word. By stimulating the one through the other they grow fat, and do literally inherit the land of New York theatrical enterprise.

This facile patriotism, always near the surface in Americans, grows deeper and more fervid as it localizes. There is an almost fanatical loyalty and

pride shown by the Southerner for the South, the New Englander for New England, and certainly by the New Yorker for "little old N'Yawk." The foreigner who lumps all Americans indiscriminately as "Yankees," in America soon learns his unpardonable mistake, and is careful to confine the opprobrious epithet to the inhabitants of those north-eastern states who dote on it. He learns, too, even in New York, where all are amalgamated, the real and vital differences between the separate types of the four great sections of the continent; and the curiously intense snobbism they display towards one another.

For example, New York Society sniffs at Westerners; let them approach the citadel ever so heavily armed with gold mines, they have a long siege before it surrenders to them. On the other hand, the same society smiles eagerly upon Southerners of no pocket-books at all; and feeds and fêtes and fawns upon them, because they are doomed, the minute their Southern accent is heard, to come of "a good old family." The idea of a decayed aristocracy in two-hundred-year-old America is not without comedy; but in the States, Southerners are taken very solemnly, by themselves, as by every one else.

My friend of the æsthetic antipathy to books (really a delightful person) is a Southerner—or was, before gathered into the fold of the New York Four

Hundred. She apologized for taking me to the Horse Show (which she thought might amuse me, however) because "no one goes any more. It's all Middle West, and commuters." I must explain that Middle West is the one thing worse than West (*i.e.* Colorado to Pacific Coast); and that commuters are those unfortunates without the sacred pale, who are forced to journey to and from Manhattan by underground tubes or by ferries. They are the butt of comic newspaper supplements, topical songs, and society witticisms; also the despised and over-charged "out-of-town customers" of the haughty Fifth Avenue importer.

For the latter (a phenomenon unique to New York) has her own system of snobbism, quite as elaborate as that of her proudest client. They are really a remarkable mixture of superciliousness and abject servility, these Irish and Hebrew "Madame Célèstes," whose thriving establishments form so conspicuous a part of the important Avenue. As exponents of the vagaries of American democracy, they deserve a paragraph to themselves.

Each has her rococo shop, and her retinue of mannequin assistants garbed in the extreme of fashion; each makes her yearly or bi-yearly trip to Paris, from which she returns with strange and bizarre creations which she assures her patrons are the "only thing" being worn by Parisiennes this

season. Now, even the untutored male knows that there is never an "only thing" favoured by the capricious and original Parisienne; but that she changes with every wind, and in all seasons wears everything under the sun (including ankle-bracelets and Cubist hats), provided it has the one hall-mark: *chic*.

But Madame New York meekly accepts the Irish lady's dictum, and arrays herself accordingly—with what result of extravagant monotony we shall see later on. Enough for the present that she is absolutely submissive to the vulgar taste and iron decrees of the rubicund "Célèste" from Cork, and that the latter alternately condescends and grovels to her, in a manner amazing to the foreigner who may be looking on. Yet on second thoughts it is quite explicable: after the habit of all Americans, native or naturalized, "Célèste" cannot conceal that she considers herself "as good as" any one, if not a shade better than some. At the same time, again truly American, she worships the dollars Madame represents (and whose aggregate she can quote to a decimal), and respects the lady in proportion. Hence her bewildering combinations of "Certainly, Madame—it shall be exactly as Madame orders," with "Oh, *my dear*, I wouldn't have that! Why, girlie, that on you with your dark skin would look like sky-blue on an Indian! But see, dear, here's a pretty pink model,"—etc.

And so it continues, unctuous deference sandwiched between endearments and snubs throughout the entire conference of shop-keeper and customer; and the latter takes it all as a matter of course, though, if her own husband should venture to disagree with her on any point of judgment, she would be furious with him for a week. When I commented to one lady on these familiar blandishments and criticisms of shop people in New York she says indulgently, "Oh, they all do it. They don't mean anything, it's only their way."

Yet I have heard that same lady hotly protest against the wife of a Colorado silver magnate (whom she had known for years) daring to address her by her Christian name. "That vulgar Westerner!" she exclaimed, "the next thing, she'll be calling me 'dear'!"

Democracy remains democracy as long as it cannot possibly encroach upon the social sphere; the moment the boundary is passed, however, and the successful "climber" threatens equal footing with the *grande dame*, who herself is still climbing in England or Europe, anathema! The fact is, that Americans, like all other very young people, seek to hide their lack of assurance—social and otherwise—by an aggressive policy of defence which they call independence; but which is verily snobbism of the most virulent brand. From the John Browns to

the multi-millionaires with daughters who are duchesses, they are intent on emphasizing their own position and its privileges; unconscious that if they themselves were sure of it, so would be every one else.

But inevitably the actors must stumble and stammer, and insert false lines, before finally they shall "feel" their parts, and forge ahead to the victory of finished performance.

[Underwood & Underwood.

"NEW YORK'S FINEST": THE FAMOUS MOUNTED POLICE SQUAD.

## III

### "OFF DUTY"

WHEN one ponders what the New Yorker in his leisure hours most enjoys, one answers without hesitation: feeding. The word is not elegant, but neither is the act, as one sees it in process at the mammoth restaurants. Far heavier and more prolonged than mere eating and drinking, this serious cult of food on the part of the average Manhattanite has been admirably dealt with in an American magazine article called "Lobster Society."

We are shown the moneyed plutocrat and his exuberant "lady friend," the mauve-waistcoated sporting man, the society *declassée* with her little air of tragedy and gorgeous jewels, the expansive Hebrew and his chorus girl, the *gauche* out-of-town couple with their ecstatic smiles and last season's clothes; all that hazy limbo that hovers on the social boundary-line, but hovers futilely, and that seeks to smother its disappointment with elaborate feasts of over-rich food.

It is amazing, the thousands of these people that there are,—New York seems to breed them faster

than any other type; and the hundreds of restaurants they support. Every hotel (and there is practically one on every street corner) has its three or four dining-rooms, its Palm Garden, Dutch Grill, etc.; but as all these were not enough, shrewd Frenchmen and Germans and Viennese have dotted the city with *cafés* and *Brauhäuser* and *Little Hungaries*, to say nothing of the alarming Egyptian and Turkish abortions that are the favourite erection of the American restaurateur himself.

The typical New York feeding-place from the outside is a palace in terra-cotta; from the inside, a vast galleried room or set of rooms, upheld by rose or ochre marble pillars, carpeted with thick red rugs, furnished with bright gilt chairs and heavily damasked, flower-laden tables, the whole interspersed and overtopped and surrounded by a jumble of fountains, gilt-and-onyx sphinxes, caryatids, centaurs, bacchantes, and Heaven knows what else of the superfluous and disassociated. To reach one's table one must thread one's way through a maze of *lions couchants*, peacocks with spread mother-o'-pearl tails, and opalescent dragons that turn out to be lights: proud contributors to the "million-dollar decorative scheme" referred to in the advertisements of the house. Finally anchored in this sea of sumptuousness, one is confronted with the dire necessity of

ordering a meal, from a menu that would have staggered Epicurus.

There is the *table d'hôte* of nine courses (any of which, in contrast with the usual *table d'hôte* "dabs," is a meal in itself); or there is the bewildering *carte du jour*, from which to choose strawberries in December, oranges in May, or whatever collection of ruinous exotics one pleases. The New Yorker himself goes methodically down the list, from oysters to iced pudding; impartial in his recognition of the merits of lobster bisque, *sole au gratin*, creamed sweetbreads, Porterhouse steak, broiled partridge and Russian salad. He sits down to this orgy about seven o'clock, and usually rises—or is assisted to rise—at ten or half-past; unless he is going on to a play, in which case he disposes of his nine courses with the same lightning execution he displays at his quick-lunch, only increasing his drink supply to facilitate the process.

Here we touch a phase of the American character less pleasant than any other: the national tendency to intemperance. It is not that Americans, as a race, drink more than other people; it is that their drinks are more vicious. They have carried the cocktail fairly well over the whole world with them, but besides cocktails they have a score of other drinks no less insidious and intoxicating. The mint julep, the gin fizz, the "sloe-jinricky," play their deadly part

in undermining American sobriety; and women almost as commonly as men fall victims to the habit of these things. Though, until very recently, New York women have frowned upon the cigarette, they have always joined unreservedly in the general custom of drinking; indeed, it is an open secret that the majority of the "tea" rooms of New York partake discreetly of the nature of a ladies' bar. However, now that five o'clock dancing has been added as the chief attraction of these establishments, the sale of liquor is restricted in consideration of the large number of young girls and men who would certainly buy.

For opposite the many advantages of the freedom given to young people in America, one must write this drawback: it leads them to drink together, and to encourage one another in the habit. One of the most depressing sights I have ever seen was a group of young college boys and girls (none of them over twenty) in an overheated, over-ornamented New York restaurant, boisterous and flushed, as they contested one another's ability to drink the most champagne. I do not mean to say that they became actually drunk, in the bald definition of the word; but voices were raised, laughter rang loud and high-pitched, and the betraying signs of the fiery stuff they were tossing off by the dozen glasses, plainly showed in their feverish excitement and hectic cheeks.

Doubtless their mothers would have told you innocently that they were off having a "nice, sensible, boy-and-girl time." Mothers are criminally trustful creatures.

During the *cabaret* show later on these young people were first to catch the questionable jokes and to exchange a knowing smile with one another; loudest to applaud the suggestive dances and the more suggestive songs. The *cabaret* in America differs from the *cabaret* in France, in that it lacks the saving grace of French wit to redeem it. When Americans undertake the *risqué*, like all Anglo-Saxons, they are immediately vulgar. Too, an innate rowdyism—part, I suppose, of their very youth—discloses itself in the ordinarily most sedate. They laugh uproariously, and nudge each other, and even join in the chorus of the songs they like; swaying to the music, with an abandon that curiously suggests their negro slaves of former generations.

Certainly the old shuffling clog-dances of the negro are responsible for the syncopated modern ragtime, which is the American national music. I was visiting some Americans in Tokio when a portfolio of "the new music" was sent out to them (1899); and I remember that it consisted entirely of "coon-songs" and cake-walks, with negro titles, and pictures of negroes dancing, on the cover. However, there is a natural affinity between the jerky,

racing, ragtime measures and the nervous, precipitate American character. One can almost hear, between beats, the familiar rush of feet recklessly tearing along, stumbling, halting abruptly, only to fly ahead faster. Ragtime is the pell-mell, helter-skelter, headlong spirit of America expressed in tune; and no other people, however charmed by its odd fascination and wild swing, can play or dance to it like Americans.

Ragtime alone vindicates the New York *cabaret*; and one is willing to endure the vaudeville clap-trap and spurious French jokes for the sake of the clever dancing that usually concludes the performance. This is not the turkey-trot or tango of the earlier evening, but a sort of furious two-step danced by a man and a girl, generally very young, and always marvellously lithe in their swift gliding and whirling round the small stage. Often negroes are the performers, but then it is usually a solo dance by a man, and takes the form of the old shuffling "clog." "Darkies," as the American calls them, can keep this up for hours; going through any number of fantastic and amusing contortions, while never budging from one particular spot.

Altogether our New Yorker, who pays a dollar and a half for his elaborate *table d'hôte* dinner, and entertainment like this combined, gets his money's worth. But the New Yorker insists on that. He is ready to pay a handsome price if

necessary, but he demands handsome return — and no "extras," if you please. "When I give two dollars for a seat at the theatre," an irate American said to me one evening at the Paris *Odéon*, "I expect it to pay for everything there is—programme, a place to put my hat, and the whole outfit. But in this highwayman's country, they hold you up for the usher's salary, and make you pay for a drink of water!"

They certainly do not make you pay for water in the theatres of America, else every one would go bankrupt; for between the acts the ushers are kept busy carrying glass after glass of the melted ice that every one thirstily imbibes, only to call for more. It is true, however, that there are not in American theatres, and other places supported by the public, those tiresome supplements and annoying petty demands that detract from one's pleasure at Continental and English establishments of like nature. The American insists on a maximum amount of comfort, no matter where he is; and insists on paying for it in a lump, either at the beginning or the end. Hence at the theatre, his programme is in his seat when he reaches it; his hat fits in the rack underneath, and far from being attacked by the usher for a *petite service*, the latter would lose her position if she accepted a tip, however small.

Speaking of the theatres in general, and the type

of drama they afford, we have already commented on the most popular—the extravaganza and musical comedy show. But, contrary to the idea of many foreigners, there is in America a finely developed legitimate drama, which has able exponents in Eugene Walter, Edward Sheldon, Augustus Thomas, the late Clyde Fitch, and a score of others. Their plays present the stirring and highly dramatic scenes of American business and social life (using the word in its broader sense); and while many of the situations are hard for the stranger to appreciate at their full value—being peculiar to America in rather greater degree than English plays are peculiar to England and French to France—he cannot fail to be impressed with the vivid realism and strong climax of the typical American comedy.

The nation as a whole is vehemently opposed to tragedy in any form, and demands of books and plays alike that they invariably shall "end well." Such brilliant exceptions as Eugene Walter's *The Easiest Way*, and Sheldon's *The Nigger*, only prove the rule that the successful piece in America must have a happy ending. High finance plays, naturally, an important part as nucleus of plots; so also does the marriage of working girls (preferably telephone clerks) with scions of the Upper Ten. Indeed, the playwright in this country of perpetual adventure has only to look into the daily newspapers for enough

romance and sensation to fill every theatre in New York.

One is led to think that the people themselves are surfeited with all this actual drama that surrounds them; for they seem rather languid as an audience, and must be piqued by more and more startling "thrillers" before moved to enthusiasm or applause. Even then their approval is usually directed towards the "star," whom really they come to see, and in whom they have far greater interest than in the play. I have frequently noticed that on the theatrical bills in New York the name of the principal actor or actress in the piece is given the largest type, the title next largest; while the author is tucked away like an afterthought, in letters that can just be seen.

It takes the acute American business-man—who is always a business-man whether financing a railroad or a Broadway farce—to build up ordinary actors into valuable theatrical properties, by means of extravagant advertising and the right kind of notoriety. Given a comedian of average talent, average good looks, an average amount of magnetism, *and* a clever press agent: you have a "star"! This brilliant being draws five times the salary of the leading lady or gentleman of former times; and in return has only to confide her (or his) life-history and beauty recipes to the

public *via* the current magazines. Furthermore, stars are received with open arms by society; and may be divorced oftener than other people, without injury—rather with distinct advantage—to their reputation. Each new divorce gives a fillip to the public curiosity, and so brings in money to the box-office.

For artists of whatever sort, the all-important asset in America is a "big name." How or why it has become big is a secondary matter, if of any moment at all. Ladies who have figured in murder trials, gentlemen whom circumstantial evidence alone has failed to prove assassins, are eagerly sought after by enterprising variety managers, who beg them to accept the paltry sum of a thousand dollars a week for showing themselves to curious crowds, and delivering a ten-minute monologue on the deficiencies of American law!

This is so literally true that, at one of the New York roof-gardens (which serve as summer theatres), I gazed upon the mere chauffeur of a famous murder case, who had refused a thousand but deigned to accept fifteen hundred dollars a week for displaying himself and recounting his adventures. The personal affairs of all "stars" are kept so constantly before the public, by means of newspaper interviews, copiously distributed photographs, etc., that one hears people of every class discussing the various actors

and actresses as intimately as though they were their life-long friends.

Thus at the theatre: "Oh no, the play isn't anything, but I come to see Laura Lee," says the lady behind one. "My, but she's stunning! You ought to see her in blue. I don't think so much of these dresses she's wearing to-night—she got them at Héloise's. Now generally she gets her things at Robert's. She says Robert just suits her *genre*."

"Yes, isn't she pretty?" (from the lady *vis-à-vis*). "But a girl of Laura Lee's type ought not to wear pearls. She's too dark. She says herself she doesn't dare go out without a veil, and all summer she uses cucumber cream that she makes from her own recipe. It's a pint of milk, two ounces of orris,"—etc. etc.

While over in the box to one's left, the bediamonded dowager with the Colorado R's is saying: "You know, she divorced her first husband because he made her pay the rent, and now she's leading a cat-and-dog life with this one because he's jealous of the manager. Mrs. Willy Spry had her at the Ritz the other night, and the Jim Flings on Friday. Josiah, *we* must have Miss Lee to stay."

Every popular actress has her special coterie in society, who regale her with flattery and *foie gras*, and count on her sending them tickets for first nights. Until quite recently these fashionable

people were the only ones who appeared at the theatre in evening dress; and it was the usual thing for the "orchestra" (*i.e.* the stalls) to be occupied by men in business suits and girls in the perennial "shirt-waist." Now, however, New Yorkers are beginning to break away from this unattractive austerity, and their theatre audiences are enlivened by a sprinkling of light frocks and dress shirts. It has always struck one as odd that a people so devoted to display should not have seized this opportunity long ago; but then one remembers that the average theatre-goer in New York is the business man or woman who can afford to go to the play, but who is too tired to dress for it.

It is worth noting, by the way, that tickets on the whole are considerably higher-priced than in England or the Continental cities. While the regular price for "orchestra" seats is two dollars (eight shillings), a place in the balcony or gallery—there are only the two upper sections—costs from a dollar to a dollar and a half; and there is no pit, or other accommodation for the poorer people. Perhaps because New York takes it for granted that there are no poor people within the gates of her prosperity. Still, there are the "vaudeville" houses, which take the place of music-halls, and where prices range from twenty-five cents to a dollar. And now we hear there is to be a People's Opera, promoted by the

indefatigable Mr. Hammerstein, who proposes to offer the lighter French and Italian pieces at popular prices.

If he succeeds he will have inaugurated a new epoch in the musical history of America; for hitherto opera, along with every other art, has been commercialized to the extent that only the very wealthy can enjoy it. "The Golden Horse-Shoe," where society disports itself, particularly on Monday evenings, has long been one of the wonders of the world for brilliancy and splendour. The double tier of boxes circling the great amphitheatre boasts more beautiful women, gorgeously arrayed, than any other place of assembly in America. Yet as I first saw them, from my modest seat in the stalls, they appeared to be a collection of radiant Venuses sitting in gilded bath-tubs; for above the high box-rail, only rows of gleaming shoulders, marvellously dressed heads, and winking jewels were visible.

Later, in the foyer, I discovered that some of them at least were more modernly attired than the lady who rose from the sea; but the first vision remains the more distinct, adding to itself a note of tragedy when one considers all those masterpieces of *Célèste* or *Héloise*, lost to the eager public who had come to see them—and who instead could only see and hear the masterpiece of Wagner! A few students and music-lovers and other eccentrics bore

up under the disappointment, I suppose; but for the majority of the house it must have been a sorry frustration of hopes.

One cannot wax enthusiastic over opera in New York, from any standpoint. Here again the performance as a whole is little thought of; the quartet of exorbitantly paid "stars" being charged with the significance of the entire work. The chorus goes its lackadaisical way, unheeded, even smiling and exchanging remarks together in the background, —I once saw two priests in *Aïda* pull each other's beards! Why not? The audience, if it pays attention to the music at all, pays attention to Caruso or Farrar or Tetrazzini—to the "big name" and the big voice, not to petty details such as chorus or *mise-en-scène.*

As a matter of fact, the Americans are not a musical people, and would probably have still less to do with opera and concerts if society had not made them fashionable. A débutante who sat next me at a performance of *Tristan* remarked plaintively: "I do hate it when our night falls on this. I think it's such a *sad story,* Tristan!" One hears many comments quite as naïve, for only a very small class of New Yorkers know or care anything about music outside of ragtime. It is a fad with them, rather than a taste, and they attend morning musicals (of which there is a quantity) religiously,

as they attend New Thought lectures or Buddhist *séances.*

Every sort of cult and fantastic sect flourishes in New York. Swamis, crystal-gazers, astrologers, mind-readers, and Messiahs of every kind and colour reap a luxuriant harvest there. Women, especially, have a new creed for every month in the year; and discuss "the aura," and "the spiritual significance of colour," with profound solemnity. On being presented to a lady, you are apt to be asked your birth-date, the number of letters in your Christian name, your favourite hue, and other momentous questions that must be made clear before acquaintance can proceed, or even begin at all. "John?" cries the lady triumphantly. "I *knew* you were a John the minute I saw you. Now, what would you say I am?"

You are sure to say "a Mabel" where she is an Edith, or a Gladys where she is a Helen, or to commit some other blunder which it takes the better part of an hour to have explained to you; but at least it saves you the trouble of delivering your impressions of New York for the two-hundredth time —and they are really flatteringly concerned about you, these good ladies.

In relating thus desultorily some of the fads and amusements of the New Yorker when he will take time for either, I must not slight his sports. He has

never adopted hunting or shooting to any great extent, and he rides badly, always looking as though he were ahead of his horse; but his tennis, base-ball, and beautiful open-field game of Lacrosse are very fine. In each of these his wiry, lean agility is shown to fine advantage; as in swimming also, and cross-country running, for which he holds the prize.

It is a common sight, after dusk, to see college boys in their track suits running round the squares of New York, or four and five abreast down the Avenue, when shops have been closed and fashion has gone home to dine. In general, Americans are athletes rather than sportsmen. There is not the keen, prevailing sports-spirit among them that there is among Englishmen, for example; but a passion for individual prowess and distinction, which leads them to train more strictly and severely than any other nation. At intercollegiate or professional games, enthusiasm is always centred on some particular hero on either side; and at the end the winner of these two is raised to the shoulders of his ardent "rooters," and borne in triumph from the field.

One of the most interesting things to be seen in America is a great intercollegiate base-ball or football game, where as many as thirty thousand spectators are massed round the field, and special trains run to and from New York and other cities all day, to accommodate the crowds attending. The roads, too, are thick

with motors, gaily decorated with the banners and colours of the favoured side; and fathers, mothers, sisters, and sweethearts turn out in gala attire to cheer their particular hopeful. For once the harassed man-of-affairs throws business to the four winds, remembers only that he is an "old grad" of Princeton or Harvard or Yale, and hurries off to shout for his *alma mater*.

At the field, the two sides of partisans are divided into sharply marked semi-circles; so that with the ribbons and flowers and banners of their chosen colour, they appear as one great mass of blue on the one hand, red on the other—or green or orange, as the college hue may be. When the contesting teams enter the field, these two vast bodies rise as one man, and a shout goes up that thrills the heavens. Then begins the "rooting,"—a succession of songs, yells, ringing of bells and tooting of horns, that continues throughout the game, and in which every one joins with wilder and yet wilder zeal. Middle-aged men stand upon their seats and bawl three-times-threes till they are hoarse; young girls laugh and cry and split their gloves to tatters, in madness of applause; small boys screech encouragement to "our side," withering taunts to the opponents; and then all at once there will come a deathly hush—in such a huge congregation of people, twice as impressive as all their noise—while a goal is made, or a "Home" base

taken; and the frenzy bursts forth again, more deafening than ever.

The only parallel to it that I have ever seen is the bull-fight in Spain; and there the enthusiasm is banal in comparison, for the crowd is only a third as big, and the contest that rouses their excitement the mere contest of man with an animal that they know will be worsted. But in the American arena, men are fighting with men—or rather individuals with individuals; for in the mind of each onlooker, one outstanding person is up to prove his mettle with another—and this nation of individuals who are born to fight, and to win from one another, loses its head and goes mad over the spectacle.

For the matter of that, so did I—if I am only a country cousin.

## IV

### "MISS NEW YORK, JR."

THERE is no woman in modern times of whom so much has been written, so little said, as of the American woman. Essayists have echoed one another in pronouncing her the handsomest, the best dressed, the most virtuous, and altogether the most attractive woman the world round. Psychologists have let her carefully alone; she is not a simple problem to expound. She is, however, a most interesting one, and I have not the courage to slight her with the usual cursory remarks on eyes, hair, and figure. She deserves a second and more searching glance.

To her own countrymen she is a goddess on a pedestal that never totters; to the foreigner she is a pretty, restless, thoroughly selfish female, who roams the earth at scandalous liberty, while her husband sits at home and posts cheques. Naturally, the truth—if one can get at truth regarding such a complex creature—falls between these two conceptions: the American woman is a splendid, faulty, human being, in whom the extremes of human

weakness and nobility seem surely to have met. She is the product of the extreme-Western philosophy of absolute individualism, and as such is constituted a law unto herself which she defies the world to gainsay. At the same time, she knows herself so little that she changes and contradicts this law constantly; thus bewildering those who are trying to understand it and her.

For example, we are convinced of her independence. We go with her to the milliner's. She wants a hat with plumes. "Oh, but, *my dear*," says the sales-lady reprovingly, "they aren't wearing plumes this season—they aren't wearing them *at all*. Everybody is having paradise feathers." Madame New York instantly declares that in that case she must have paradise feathers too; and is thoroughly content when the same are added to the nine hundred and ninety-nine other feathers that flutter on the Avenue next afternoon. Plumes may be far more becoming to her, in her heart she may secretly regret them; but she must have what every one else has. *She has not the independence to break away from the herd*

And so it is with all her costume, her coiffure, the very bag on her wrist and brooch at her throat: every detail must be that detail of the type. She neither dares nor knows how to be different. But within the stronghold of the type she dares any-

thing. Are "they" wearing narrow skirts? Every New York woman challenges every other, with her sheath three inches tighter than the last lady's. Are they slashing skirts to the ankle? Madame New York slashes hers to the shoe-tops. Once secured by the sanction of the mass, her instinct for exaggeration is unleashed; her perverse imagination shakes off its chronic torpor, and soars to flights of fearful and wonderful audacity.

Even then, however, she originates no fantasy of her own, but simply elaborates and enlarges upon the primary copy. Her impulse is not to think and create, but to observe and assimilate. It would never occur to her to study the lines of her head and arrange her hair accordingly; rather she studies the head of her next-door neighbour, and promptly duplicates it—generally with distinct improvement over the original. True to her race, she has a genius for imitation that will not be subdued. But she is no artist.

For this reason the American woman bores us with her vanity, where the Englishwoman rouses our tenderness, and the Frenchwoman piques and allures. There is an appealing clumsiness in the way the Englishwoman goes about adding her little touches of feminine adornment; the badly tied bow, the awkward bit of lace, making their deprecating bid for favour move us to protective

indulgence. The Frenchwoman, with her seductive devices of alternate concealment and daring display, her constant emphasis of the two outstanding charms of all femininity, mystery and change, rouses us to the fire and boldness of the chase. But when we come to the American woman, we are confronted with that most depressing of personalities, the stereotyped. She has made of herself a mannequin for the exposition of expensive clothes, costly jewels, and a mass of futile accessories that neither in themselves or as pointers to an individuality signify whatsoever. This figure of set elegance she has overlaid with a determined animation that is never allowed to flag, but keeps the puppet in an incessant state of laughing, smiling, chattering—motion of one sort or another—till we long for the machinery to run down and the show to be ended.

But this never occurs, except when the entire elaborate mechanism falls to pieces with a crash, and the woman becomes that wretched sexless thing —a nervous wreck. Till then, to use her own favourite expression, "she will go till she drops"; and the onlooker is forced to watch her in the unattractive process.

Of course, the motive of this excessive activity on the part of American men and women alike is the passionate wish to appear young. As in the extreme East age is worshipped, here in the extreme

West youth constitutes a religion, of which young women are the high priestesses. Far from moving steadily on to a climax in ripe maturity, life for the American girl reaches its dazzling apex when she is eighteen or twenty; this, she is constantly told by parents, teachers, and friends, is the golden period of her existence. She is urged to make the most of every precious minute; and everything and everybody must be sacrificed in helping her to do it.

As a matter of course, she is given the most comfortable room in the house, the prettiest clothes, the best seat at the theatre. As a matter of course, she accepts them. Why should it occur to her to defer to age, when age anxiously and at every turn defers to her? Oneself as the pivot of existence is far more interesting than any other creature; and it is all so brief. Soon will come marriage, with its tiresome responsibilities, its liberty curtailed; and children, the forerunners of awful middle age. Laugh, dance, and amuse yourself to-day is the eternal warning in the ears of the American girl; for to-morrow you will be on the shelf, and another generation will have come into your kingdom.

The young lady is not slow to hear the call—or to follow it. With feverish haste she seizes her prerogative of queen of the moment, and demands the satisfaction of her every caprice. Her tastes and desires regulate the diversion and education of

the community. What she favours, succeeds; what she frowns on, fails. A famous American actress told me that she traced her fortune to her popularity with young girls. "I never snub them," she said; "when they write me silly letters, I answer them. I guard my reputation to the point of prudishness, so that I may meet them socially, and invite them to my home. They are the talisman of my career. It matters little what I play—if the young girls like me, I have a success."

The wise theatrical manager, however, is differently minded. He too has his harvest to reap from the approval of Miss New York, Jr., and arranges his programme accordingly. Thus the American playgoer is treated to a series of musical comedies, full of smart slang scrappily composed round a hybrid waltz; so-called "society plays," stocked with sumptuous clothes, many servants, and shallow dialogue; unrecognizable "adapted" pieces, expurgated not only of the *risqué*, but of all wit and local atmosphere as well; and finally, the magnificently vacuous extravaganza: this syrup and mush is regularly served to the theatre-going public, and labelled "drama"! Yet thousands of grown men and women meekly swallow it—even come to prefer it—because *Mademoiselle Miss* so decrees.

She also is originally responsible for the multitude of "society novels," vapid short stories, and

profusely illustrated gift books, which make up the literature of modern America. On her altar is the vulgar "Girl Calendar," the still more vulgar poster; flaunting her self-conscious prettiness from every shop-window, every subway and elevated book-stall. She is displayed to us with dogs, with cats, in the country, in town, getting into motors, getting out of boats, driving a four-in-hand, or again a vacuum cleaner—for she is indispensable to the advertising agent. Her fixed good looks and studied poses have invaded the Continent; and even in Spain, in the sleepy old town of Toledo, among the grave prints of Velasquez and Ribera, I came across the familiar pert silhouette with its worshipping-male counterpart, and read the familiar title: "At the Opera."

From all this superficial self-importance, whether of her own or her elders' making, one might easily write the American girl down as a vain, empty-headed nonentity, not worth thoughtful consideration. On the contrary, she decidedly is worth it. Behind her arrogance and foolish affectations is a mind alert to stimulus, a heart generous and warm to respond, a spirit brave and resourceful. It takes adversity to prove the true quality of this girl, for then her arrogance becomes high determination; her absurdities fall from her, like the cheap cloak they are, and she takes her

natural place in the world as a courageous, clear-sighted woman.

I have taken pains to study rather extensively the working girl of New York, and have found her the finest and most distinct type of American woman. This sounds rather a sweeping statement, and one difficult to substantiate; but let us examine it. Whence are the working girls of New York recruited? From the families of immigrants, you guess at once. Only a very small fraction. The great majority come from American homes, in the North, South, or Middle West; where the fathers have failed in business, or died, or in some other way left the daughters to provide for themselves.

The first impulse, on the part of the latter, is to go to New York. If you are going to hang yourself, choose a big tree, says the Talmud; and Americans have written it into their copy-books for ever. Whether they are to succeed or fail, they wish to do it in the biggest place, on the biggest scale they can achieve. The girl who has to earn her living, therefore, establishes herself in New York. And then begins the struggle that is the same for women the world over, but which the American girl meets with a sturdiness and obstinate ambition all her own.

She may have been the pampered darling of a mansion with ten servants; stoutly now she takes up her abode in a "third floor back," and becomes

her own laundress. For it is part of all the contradictions of which she is the unit, that while the most recklessly extravagant, she is also, when occasion demands, the most practical and saving of women. Her scant six or seven dollars a week are carefully portioned out to yield the utmost value on every penny. She walks to and from her work, thus saving ten cents and doing benefit to her complexion at the same time, in the tingling New York air. In the shop or office she is quiet, competent, marvellously quick to seize and assimilate the details of a business which two months ago she had never heard of. Without apparent effort she soon makes herself invaluable; and then comes the thrilling event of her first "raise."

I am talking always of the American girl of good parentage and refinement, *who is the average New York business-girl*; not of the gum-chewing, haughty misses of stupendous pompadour and impertinence, who condescend to wait on one in the cheaper shops. The average girl is sinned against rather than sinning in the matter of impudence. Often of remarkable prettiness, and always of neat and attractive appearance, she has not only the usual masculine advances to contend with, but also the liberties of that inter-sex freedom peculiar to America. The Englishman or the European never outgrows his first rude sense of shock at the pro-

miscuous contact between men and women, not only allowed but taken as a matter of course in the new country. To see an employé passing through a shop, touch a girl's hand or pat her on the shoulder, while delivering some message or order, scandalizes the foreigner only less than the girl's nonchalant acceptance of the familiarity.

But among these people there is none of the sex-consciousness that pervades older civilizations. Boys and girls, instead of being strictly segregated from childhood, are brought up together in frank intimacy. Whether the result is more or less desirable in the young man and young woman, the fact remains that the latter are quite without that sex-sensitiveness which would make their mutual attitude impossible in any other country. If the girl in the shop resents the touch of the young employé, it is not because it is a man's touch, but because it is (as she considers) the touch of an inferior. I know this to be true, from having watched young people in all classes of American society, and having observed the unvarying indifference with which these caresses are bestowed and received. Indeed, it is slanderous to call them caresses; rather are they the playful motions of a lot of young puppies or kittens.

The American girl, therefore, is committing no breach of dignity when she allows herself to be

touched by men who are her equals. But I have noticed time and again that the moment these trifling attentions take on the merest hint of the serious she is on guard—and formidable. Having been trained all her life to take care of herself (and in this she is truly and admirably independent), without fuss or unnecessary words she proceeds to put her knowledge to practical demonstration. The following conversation (which incidentally throws light on the New York dialect) I heard in an upper Avenue shop. It is typical.

"'Morning, Miss Dale. Say, but you're looking some swell to-day—that waist's a peach! (The young floor-walker lays an insinuating hand on Miss Dale's sleeve.) Me for you, Kiddo! How'd you like to take in a show to-night?"

"Thank you, I'm busy to-night."

"Well, then, to-morrow?"

"I'm busy to-morrow night, too."

"Oh, all right, make it Friday—any night you say."

Miss Dale leaves the gloves she has been sorting, to face the floor-walker squarely across the counter. "Look here, Mr. Barnes, since you can't take a hint, I'll give it you straight from the shoulder: you're not my kind, and I'm not yours. And the sooner that's understood between us, the better for both. Good-morning."

Here is none of the hesitating reserve of the English or French woman under the same circumstances, but a frank, downright declaration of fact: infinitely more convincing than the usual stumbling feminine excuses. It may be added that while the American girl in a shop is generally a fine type of creature, the American man in a shop is generally inferior. Otherwise he would "get out and hustle for a bigger job." His feminine colleagues realize this, and are apt to despise him in consequence. Certainly there is little if any over-intimacy between shop men and girls; and the demoralizing English system of "living-in" does not exist in America.

But there is a deeper reason for the almost universal morality of the American working girl. That is, her high opinion of herself. This passion (for it is really that), which in the girl of idle wealth shows itself in cold selfishness and meaningless adornment, in her self-dependent sister reaches the point of an ideal. When the American girl goes into business, it is not as a makeshift until she shall marry, or until something else turns up; it is because she has confidence in herself to make her own life, and to make it a success. The faint heart and self-mistrust which work the undoing of girls of this class in other nations have no place in the character of Miss America. Resolutely she fixes her goal, and nothing can stop her till she has attained it. Failure, dis-

appointment, rebuff, only seem to steel her purpose stronger; and if the worst comes to worst, nine times out of ten she will die rather than acknowledge herself beaten by surrendering to a man.

But she dies hard, and has generally compassed her purpose long since. It may be confined to rising from "notions" to "imported models" in a single shop; or it may be running the gamut from office-girl to head manager of an important business. No matter how ambitious her aspiration, or the seeming impossibility of it, the American girl is very apt to get what she wants in the end. She has the three great assets for success: pluck, self-confidence, and keen wits; and they carry her often far beyond her most daring dreams of attainment.

My friend Cynthia Brand is an example. She came to New York when she was twenty-two, with thirty dollars and an idea. The idea was to design clothes for young girls between the ages of twelve and twenty; clothes that should be at once simple and distinguished, and many miles removed from the rigid commonplaceness of the "Misses' Department." All very well; but where was the shop, the capital, the *clientèle*? In the tip of Cynthia's pencil.

She had two or three dozen sketches, and one good tailored frock. Every American woman who is successful begins with a good tailored frock. Cynthia put hers on, took her sketches under her

arm, and went to the best dressmaking establishment in New York. That is another characteristic of American self-appreciation: they always go straight to the best. The haughty forewoman was bored at first, but when she had languidly inspected a few of Cynthia's sketches she was roused to interest, if not enthusiasm. Two days later Cynthia took her position as "designer for *jeunes filles*" at L——'s, at a salary which even for New York was considerable.

Hence the capital. The *clientèle* developed inevitably, and was soon excuse in itself for the girl to start a place of her own. At the end of her third year in New York she saw her dream of independence realized in a *chic* little shop marked *Brand*; at the end of her fifth the shop had evolved into an establishment of three storeys. And ten years after the girl with her thirty dollars arrived at an East Side boarding-house, she put up a sky-scraper —at any rate an eleven-storey building—of her own; while the hall-bedroom at the boarding-house is become a beautiful apartment on Central Park West. And meanwhile, some one made the discovery that Cynthia Brand was one of *the* Brands of Virginia, and society took her up. To-day she is a personage, as well as one of the keenest business-women in New York.

Marvellous, but a unique experience, you say. Unique only in degree of success, not in the fact

itself. There are hundreds, even thousands, of Cynthia Brands plying their prosperous trades in the American commercial capital. As photographers, decorators, restaurant and tea-room proprietors, jewellers, florists, and specialists of every kind, these enterprising women are calmly proving that the home is by no means their only sphere; that in the realm of economics, at least, they are the equals, both in energy and intelligence, of their comrade man.

It is interesting to contrast this strongly feminist attitude of the American woman with the militant suffragism of her British sister. No two methods of obtaining the same result could be more different. Years ago the American woman emancipated herself, without ostentation or outcry, by quietly taking her place in the commonwealth as a breadwinner. Voluntarily she stepped down from the pedestal (to which, however, her sentimental *confrère* promptly re-raised her), and set about claiming her share in the business of life. To disregard her now would be futile. She is too important; she has made herself too vital a factor in economic activity, to be disregarded when it comes to civic matters.

And so, while Englishwomen, less progressive in the true sense of the word, have been window-smashing and setting fires, the suffrage they so ardently desire has been tranquilly and naturally acquired by their shrewder American cousins.

Fifteen of the forty-odd States now have universal suffrage ; almost every State has suffrage in some form. And it will be a very short time—perhaps ten years, perhaps fifteen,—until all of the great continent will come under the equal rule of men and women alike.

I had the interesting privilege of witnessing the mammoth Suffrage Parade in New York, just before the Presidential Election last Fall. In more than one way it was a revelation. After the jeering, hooting mob at the demonstrations in Hyde Park, this absorbed, respectful crowd that lined both sides of Fifth Avenue was even more impressive than the procession of women itself. But it was seeing the latter, as they marched past twenty-thousand strong, that gave one the key to the enthusiasm of the crowd. A fresh-faced, well-dressed, composed company of women ; women of all ages—college girls, young matrons, middle-aged mothers with their daughters by their side, elderly ladies, and even dowagers white-haired and hearty—made up the inspiring throng. They greeted the cheers of the crowd smilingly, yet with dignity ; their own cheers were no less ardent for being orderly and restrained : and about their whole bearing was a sanity and good sense, joined to a thoroughly feminine wish to please, which gave away the secret of their popularity.

It was the American woman at her best—which

[*Underwood & Underwood.*

AMERICAN WOMAN GOES TO WAR!

(March of the Suffragists on Washington.)

means the American woman with a steady, splendid purpose, which she intends to accomplish; and in which she enlists not only the support, but the sympathy and deserved co-operation of her fellow-men. Later I saw the start of the more significant march of "General" Rosalie Jones and her company of young women who walked from New York to Washington (by rail two hundred and twenty miles) to present their Suffrage Petition to President Wilson. They were three weeks on the road, in the bitterest winter weather, but never was their high courage daunted; and when finally they reached Washington on the day the President-elect arrived, Mr. Wilson stole into the capital unnoticed, because every one was off greeting the suffragists!

It is a far subtler method than kidnapping Prime Ministers, this method of kidnapping the people instead. And American women accomplish it by their sturdy good-humour and daring combined, and by refusing to part with a jot of their femininity in the process.

If I have seemed to contradict myself in this brief analysis of so complex and interesting a character, I can only go back to my first statement —that the American herself is a contradiction, only definite within her particular type. The type of the mere woman of pleasure, which implies the woman of wealth, I confess to finding the extreme

of vapidity and selfishness—as Americans are always the extreme of something. This is the type the foreigner knows by heart and despises. But the American woman of intelligence, the woman of clear vision, fine aim, and splendid accomplishment, he does not know; for she is at home, earning her living.

## V

### "MATRIMONY & CO."

OF all the acts which America has in solution, marriage is as yet the most unsatisfactory, the least organized. It is easy to dismiss it with a vague wave of the hand, and the slighting, "Oh yes—the divorce evil." But really to understand the problem with all its complex difficulties, one must go a great deal further into the thought and simple animal feeling of the people who harbour the divorce evil.

Physiologically speaking, Americans are made up of nerves; psychologically, they are made up of sentiment: a volatile combination, fatal to steadiness or logic of expression. We have spoken of the everyday habit of contact among them, the trifling touch that passes unheeded between young men and girls, from childhood on into maturity. This is but a single phase of that diffuseness of sex-energy which, being distributed through a variety of channels, with the American nowhere is very profound or vital. The constant comradeship between the two sexes, from babyhood throughout all life,

makes for many fine things; but it does not make for passion. And as though dimly they realize this, Americans—both men and women—seem desperately bent on manufacturing it.

Hence their suggestive songs, their suggestive books, their crudely suggestive plays; and above all their recognized game of "teasing," in which the young girl uses every device for plaguing the young man—to lead him on, but never to lead him too far. Always suggestion, never realization; as a nation they retain the adolescent point of view to the end, playing with sex, which they do not understand but only vaguely feel, yet about which they have the typically adolescent curiosity.

So much for the physiological side. It is not hard to understand how, under such conditions, natural animal energy is dissipated along a hundred avenues of mere nerve excitement and satisfaction; so that when it comes to marriage, the American man or woman can have no stored-up wealth of passion to bestow, but simply the usual comradeship, the usual contact, intensified. This is all very well to begin with, but it is too slender a bond to stand the heavy strain of daily married life. Besides, there is the ingrained craving for novelty, that has been fed and fostered by life-long freedom of intercourse, until it is become in itself a passion danger-

ously strong. A few misunderstandings, a serious quarrel or two, and the couple who a year ago swore to cleave to one another till death are eager to part with one another for life—and to pass on to something new.

But a formidable stumbling-block confronts them: their ideal of marriage. Sentiment comes to the front, outraged and demanding appeasement. American life is grounded in sentiment. The idea of the American man concerning the American woman, the idea of the woman concerning the man, is a colossus of sentiment in itself. She is all-pure; he is all-chivalrous. She would not smoke a cigarette (in public), because he would be horrified; he would not confess to a *liaison* (however many it might please him to enjoy), because she would perish with shame. Each has made it a life-business to forget that the other is human, and to insist that both are impeccable. When, therefore, before the secret tribunal of matrimony, this double illusion is condemned to death, what is to be done?

Nothing that could reflect on the innocence of the woman, or the blamelessness of the man. In other words, the public ideal still must be upheld. With which the public firmly agrees; and, always willing to be hoodwinked and to hoodwink itself, makes a neat series of laws whereby men and women may enjoy unlimited license and still remain

irreproachable. Thus the difficulty is solved, sentiment is satisfied, and chaos mounts the throne.

I am always extremely interested in American disgust at the Continental marriage system. Here the inveterate sentimentalism of the nation comes out most decided and clear. In the first place, they say, the European man has no respect for women; he orders them about, or betrays them, with equal coolness and cruelty. He is mercenary to the last degree in the matter of the *dot*, but himself after marriage makes no effort to provide his wife with more than pin-money. After the honeymoon she becomes his housekeeper and the mother of his children; while he spends her dowry on a succession of mistresses, and other immoral amusements, elsewhere.

All of which, as generalization, is true. The complementary series of facts, however, the American complacently ignores. He knows nothing, for instance, of the European attitude to the young girl—how could he? His own sisters and daughters are presented, even before they are in long skirts, as objects of intimacy and flirtation; harmless flirtation, admitted, yet scarcely the thing to produce reverence for the recipient. Instead, she is given a free-and-easy consideration, which to the European is appalling. The latter may be a rake and a *debauché*, but he has one religion ingrained

and unimpeachable: in the presence of the young girl he is before an altar. And throughout all European life, the young girl is accorded a delicate dignity impossible to her less sheltered American cousin.

What good does that do her, asks the downright American, if the minute she marries she becomes a slave? On the contrary, she gains her liberty, where the American girl (in her own opinion at least) loses hers; but even if she did not, it is a matter open to dispute as to which is better off in any case: the woman who is a slave, or the woman who is master? For contentment and serenity, one must give the palm to the European. She brings her husband money instead of marrying him for his; she stands over herself and her expenditure, rather than over him and his cheque-book; and she tends her house and bears children, rather than roams the world in search of pleasure. Yet she is happy.

She may be deceived by her husband; if so, she is deceived far without the confines of her own home (Americans are restrained by no over-sensitiveness in paying court to their wives' best friends). Within her home, as mother of her husband's children, the European is impregnable. She may be betrayed, but she is never vulgarized; her affairs are not dragged through the divorce-court, or jaunted about the columns of a yellow press. Whatever she

may not be to the man whom she has married, she is once and for ever the woman with whom he shares his name, and to whom he must give his unconditional respect—or kill her. She has so much, sure and inviolate, to stand on.

The American woman has nothing sure. In a land where all things change with the sun, live, die, and are shoved along breathlessly to make room for new, she is lost in the general confusion. To-day she is Mrs. Smith, to-morrow—by her own wish, or Mr. Smith's, or both—she is Mrs. Jones, six months later she is Mrs. Somebody Else; and the conversation which includes "your children," "my children," and "our children," is not a joke in America: it is an everyday fact,—for the children themselves, a tragedy.

Young people grow up among such conditions with a flippant—to us even a horrible—idea of marriage. They look upon it, naturally, as an expedient; something temporarily good, to be entered upon as such, and without any profound thought for the future. "She married very well," means she married dollars, or position, or a title; in the person of what, it does not matter. If she is dissatisfied with her bargain, she can always make an exchange, and no one will think any the worse of her. For while Americans are horror-stricken at the idea of a woman's having a lover without the law,

within the law she may have as many as she likes, and take public sympathy and approval along with her; so long as the farce of her *purity* is carried out, this people of sentimentalists (whom Meredith calls, in general, "self-worshippers") smile complaisance.

It is simply another light on the prevailing superficiality that controls them, for that a woman shall be faithful—where she has placed her affections of whatever sort — they neither demand nor appear to think of at all. She may ruin her husband buying chiffons, or maintaining an establishment beyond his means, and not a word of blame is attached to her; on the contrary, when the husband goes bankrupt, it is he who is outcast, while every one speaks pitifully of "his poor wife." The only allegiance expected of the woman is the mere allegiance of the body; and this in the American woman is no virtue, for she has little or no passion to tempt her to bodily sin.

Rather, as we have seen, she is a highly nervous organism, demanding nerve food in the shape of sensation—constant and varied. Emotionally, she is a sort of psychic vampire, always athirst for victims to her vanity; experience from which to gain new knowledge of herself. This is true not only of the idle women of society, but of the best and intentionally most sincere. They are wholly unconscious of it, they would indignantly refute it;

yet their very system of living proves it; throughout all classes the American woman, in the majority, is sufficient unto herself, and—no matter in how noble a spirit—self-absorbed.

If she is happily married she loves her husband, yes; but why? Because he harmoniously complements the nature she is bent on developing. In like fashion she loves her children—do they not contribute a tremendous portion towards the perfect womanhood she ardently desires? And this is not saying that the finer type of American woman is not a devoted mother and wife; it is giving the deep, unconscious motive of her devotion.

But take the finer type that is not married, that remains unmarried voluntarily, and by the thousands. Take the Cynthia Brands, for example. Americans say they stay single because "they have too good a time," and this is literally true. Why should they marry when they can compass of themselves the things women generally marry for—secure position and a comfortable home? Why, except for overpowering love of some particular man? This the Cynthia Brands—*i.e.* women independently successful—are seldom apt to experience. All their energy is trained upon themselves, and their ambition; and that is never satisfied, but pushes on and on, absorbing emotion—every sort of force in the woman—till her passion becomes completely

[Underwood & Underwood.

THE TRIUMPHANT "THIRD SEX" TAKES WASHINGTON.

subjective, and marriage has nothing to offer her save the children she willingly renounces.

Thus there is in America almost a third sex; a sex of superwomen, in whom mentality triumphs to the sacrifice of the normal female. One cannot say that this side of the generally admirable "self-made" woman is appealing. It is rather hard, and even leads one to speculate as to whether the victorious bachelor girl of to-day is on the whole more attractive or better off than the despised spinster of yesterday. Of course, she has raised and strengthened the position of women, economically speaking; socially, too. But one cannot but think that she is, after all, only a partially finished super-woman, and that the ultimate creature will have more of sweetness and strong tenderness than one sees in the determined, rather rigid faces of the army of New York business-women of the present.

In the New York man (whom one is for ever slighting because his *rôle* is so inconspicuous) we have a type much less complex—quite the simplest type of normal male, in fact. The average New Yorker (that is, the New Yorker of the upper middle class) is a hard-working, obvious soul, of obvious qualities and obvious flaws. His *raison d'être* is to provide prodigally for his wife and children; to which end he steals out of the house in the morning before the rest are awake, and returns late in the evening,

hurriedly to dress and accompany Madame to some smart restaurant and the play.

Here, as at the opera or fashionable reception, his duty is simply that of background for the elaborate gorgeousness and inveterate animation of his womenfolk. Indeed, throughout all their activities the American husband and wife seem curiously irrelevant to one another; they work as a tandem, not as a team. And there is no question as to who goes first. The wife indicates the route; the husband does his best to keep up to her. If he cannot do it, no matter what his other excellences, he is a failure. He himself is convinced of it, hence his tense expression of straining every nerve towards some gigantic end that usually he is just able to compass.

The man who cannot support a woman, not in reasonable comfort but in the luxury she expects, thinks he has no right to her. The woman has taught him to think it. Thus a young friend of mine, who on twenty-five thousand a year had been engaged to a charming New York girl, told me, simply, that of course when his income was reduced to five thousand he could not marry her.

I asked what the girl thought about it. "Oh, she's a trump," he said enthusiastically; "she wouldn't throw me over because I've lost my money. But, of course, she sees it's impossible. We couldn't go the pace."

From which ingenuous confession we rightly gather that "the pace" comes first with both husband and wife, in New York; the person of one another second, if it counts at all. Their great bond of union is the building up of certain material circumstances both covet; their home life, their friends, their instinctive and lavish hospitality—everything is regulated according to this. Instead of a peaceful evening in their own drawing-room, after the man's strenuous day at the office, the woman's no less strenuous day at bridge and the dressmaker's, they must rush into evening clothes and hasten to show themselves where they should be seen. Other people's pleasures become to the American couple stern duties; to be feverishly carried out, if it helps them in ever so little towards their goal, to be strictly eschewed if it does not.

Thus we hear Mrs. Grey say to George: "Don't forget we're dining with the Fred Lanes to-night. Be home early."

"The deuce we are!" says George. "I wanted to go to the Club. I detest Lane, anyhow."

"Yes, but he's owner of *The Smart Story*; if you want them to take your new serial, you'd best dine—and get Mr. Lane to promise you. I've already lunched her, so the ground's prepared."

"Oh, very well," growls George,—"of course you're right. I'll be on hand."

Result: they animate a friendship with two odious people, whom they are afterwards obliged to invite; but—the serial is accepted by *The Smart Story*, and twenty thousand dollars goes down to George's bank account.

Quite unnecessary, all of it; as the George Greys have long ago "arrived." But the habit of years is too strong for them: they must use whom they can, to move on further. This spirit has crept into English and Continental life as well, but certainly it has its origin and prime exponents in America. No other people finds money sufficient exchange for perpetual boredom.

The European goes where he is amused, with friends who interest him. He dares. The American does not; having always to prove that he can afford to be in certain places, that he is of sufficient importance to be with certain people. America is full of ruinously expensive resorts, that have sprung up in response to this craving for self-advertisement on the part of her "rising" sons and daughters. Squads of newspaper reporters go with them, and the nation is kept accurately informed to the minute as to what Mrs. Spender wore this morning at Palm Beach, Mrs. Haveall at Newport, Mrs. Dash at Hot Springs; also how many horses, motor-cars, yachts, and other small paraphernalia Charles Spender, Jimmy Haveall, and Henry Dash

are carrying about. The credit of these men, together often with the credit of large business firms, depends on the show they can afford to make, and the jewels their wives wear.

But I believe that no man has a duller life than the rich man, or the moderately rich man, of New York. He is generally the victim of dyspepsia—obviously from too rich food taken in too great a hurry; he is always the victim of the office. Not even after he has retired, to spend the remainder of his days in dreary luxury between his clubs and Continental watering-places, does the office habit cease to torment him. Once and for ever it has murdered the enjoyment of leisure, and annihilated pleasure in peace.

Being naturally heavy-minded on all subjects except business, the American man with time on his hands is in a pitiable plight. I have met some of these poor gentlemen, wandering helplessly about the world with their major-general wives, and I must say they are among the most pathetic of creatures. They hibernate in hotel lounges, smoking their enormous cigars, and devouring their two-week old New York newspapers; or, when they get the chance, monologuing by the hour on their past master-strokes in the land where "things hum." Sometimes, in self-defence against the wife's frocks and French hats, they have a hobby: ivories, or

old silver—something eminently respectable. If so, they are apt to be laborious about it, as they are about all culture which they graft on themselves, or have grafted on them. Sometimes they turn their attention to sport; but the real sport of the American, man and woman, is climbing. It is born in them, and they never actually give it up until they die.

Meanwhile, the couple who have resisted divorce and continued to climb together, turn anxious eyes on the upward advance of their children. If the latter make a false step, mother with her trained wit must repair it; father must foot the bill. No more extravagantly indulgent parent exists than the American parent who himself has had to make his own way. His children are monarchs, weightily crowned with luxuries they do not appreciate; and for them he slaves till death or nervous prostration lays him low. One wonders when the nation that has lost its head over the American Girl will awake to the discovery of the American Father. For the present he is a silent, deprecatory creature, toiling unceasingly six days of the week; and on the seventh to be found in some unfrequented corner of the house, inundated by newspapers, or unobtrusively building blocks in the nursery—where there is one.

As a rule, American children own the house;

monopolize the conversation at meals, which almost invariably they take with their elders — whether there are guests or not; they are generally as arrogant and precocious little tyrants as unlimited indulgence and admiration can make them. They have been allowed to see and read everything their parents see and read; they have been taken to the theatre and about the world, from the time they could walk; they have, many of them, travelled abroad, and are ready to discuss Paris or London with the languid nonchalance of little old men and women: on the whole, these poor spoiled little people, through no fault of their own, are about as unpleasant and unnatural a type as can be found.

Instead of being kept simple and unsophisticated, they are early inculcated with the importance of money and the things it can buy. American boys, rather than vying with one another in tennis or swimming, vie with one another in the number of motor-cars they own—or sail-boats or saddle-horses, as the case may be. They would scorn the pony that is the English boy's delight, but it is true that many young Americans at the tender age of twelve own their own motors, which they drive and discuss with the *blasé* air of men-of-the-world. In like fashion the little girls, from the time they can toddle, are consumed with the idea of outdressing one another; and even give box parties

at the theatre, and formal luncheons—beginning, almost before they are out of the cradle, to imitate their mothers in ambition and the consuming race-spirit of competition.

Naturally, one is speaking of the children of the wealthy, or at least well-off; among the children of the working classes, whatever their grade of intelligence or education, we find the same sturdy independence and ability that characterizes their mothers and fathers. But all American children are sophisticated—one glance at a daily newspaper is enough to make them so; and they live in an atmosphere of worldly wisdom and knowledge of the sordid, which those of us who believe that childhood should be ingenuous and gay, find rather sad. The little pitchers, in this case, have not only big ears, but eyes and wits sharp to perceive the sorry things they would naturally learn soon enough.

They are allowed to wander, unshielded, among the perplexing mixed motives, the standards in disarray, of this theatre where life in its myriad relations is still in adjustment. Like small troubled gnomes seeking light, they flit across the hazardous stage; where their more experienced leaders have yet to extricate order out of a sea of sentimental hypocrisies, inflated ideals, and make-shift laws.

American men and women have been at great

pains to construct "a world not better than the world it curtains, only foolisher." They have obstinately refused to admit one another as they actually are, which, after all, is a remarkably fine race of beings; preferring the pretty flimsiness of a house of cards of their own making, to the indestructible mansion of humanity. When their passion for inventing shall be converted into an equally ardent passion for reflecting—as it surely will be—they will see their mistake in a trice; and from that time they are destined to be not a collection of finely tuned nervous organisms, but a splendid race of thinking creatures.

# "THE CURTAIN RISES" (PARIS)

## I

### ON THE GREAT ARTISTE

OUT of the turmoil and struggling confusion of rehearsal, to gaze on the finished performance of the great *artiste*! For in Paris we are before the curtain, not behind it; and few foreigners, though they may adopt the city for their own, and lovingly study it for many years, are granted more than an occasional rare glimpse of its personality without the stage between. From that safe distance Paris coquets with you, rails at you, laughs and weeps for you; but first she has handed you a programme, which informs you that she does the same for all the world, at a certain hour each day, and for a fixed price. And if ever in the ardour of your admiration you show signs of forgetting, of seeking her personal favour by a rash gesture or smile, she points you imperiously to the barricade of the footlights—or vanishes completely, in the haughtiness of her ire.

Therefore, the tourist will tell you, Paris is not

satisfactory. Because to his greedy curiosity she does not open her soul as she does the gates of her art treasures and museums, he pronounces her shallow, mercenary, heartless, even wicked. As her frankness in some things is foreign to his hypocrisy, as her complex unmorality resists his facile analysis, he grasps what he can of her; and goes away annoyed. Really to know Paris is to offer in advance a store of tolerance for her inconsistencies, patience for her whims, and the sincere desire to learn finally to see behind her mask—not to snatch it rudely from her face.

But this cannot be done in the curt fortnight which limits the casual visitor's acquaintance. Months and years must be spent, if true knowledge of the City of Light is to be won. We can only, in our brief survey of its more significant phases, indicate a guide to further study of a place and people well worth wider scrutiny.

The most prejudiced will not deny that Paris is beautiful; or that there is about her streets and broad, tree-lined avenues a graciousness at once dignified and gay. Stand, as the ordinary tourist does on his first day, in the flowering square before the Louvre. In the foreground are the fountains and bright tulip-bordered paths of the Tuileries—here a glint of gold, there a soft flash of marble statuary, shining through the trees; in the centre

the round lake where the children sail their boats. Beyond spreads the wide sweep of the Place de la Concorde, with its obelisk of terrible significance, its larger fountains throwing brilliant jets of spray; and then the trailing, upward vista of the Champs Élysées to the great triumphal Arch: yes, even to the least sensitive, Paris is beautiful.

To the subtler of appreciation, she is more than beautiful: she is impressive. For behind the studied elegance of architecture, the elaborate simplicity of gardens, the carefully lavish use of sculpture and delicate spray, is visible the imagination of a race of passionate creators—the imagination throughout, of the great artist. One meets it at every turn and corner, down dim passageways, up steep hills, across bridges, along sinuous quays: the master-hand and its "infinite capacity for taking pains." And so marvellously do its manifestations of many periods through many ages, combine to enhance each other, that one is convinced that the genius of Paris has been perennial; that St. Géneviève, her godmother, bestowed it as an immortal gift when the city was born.

From earliest days every man seems to have caught the spirit of the man who came before, and to have perpetuated it; adding his own distinctive yet always harmonious contribution to the ardent development of the whole. One built a stately

avenue; another erected a church at the end; a third added a garden on the other side of the church, and terraces leading up to it; a fourth and fifth cut streets that should give from the remaining two sides into other flowery squares with their fine edifices. And so from every view-point, and from every part of the entire city, to-day we have an unbroken series of vistas—each one different, each more charming than the last.

History has lent its grim hand to the process, too; and romance—it is not an insipid chain of flowerbeds we have to follow, but the holy warriors of Saint-Louis, the roistering braves of Henry the Great, the gallant Bourbons, the ill-starred Bonapartes. These as they passed have left their monuments; it may be only in a crumbling old chapel or ruined tower, but there they are: eloquent of days that are dead, of a spirit that lives for ever staunch in the heart of the fervent French people.

It comes over one overwhelmingly sometimes, in the midst of the careless gaiety of the modern city: the old, ever-burning spirit of rebellion and savage strife that underlies it all; and that can spring to the surface now on certain memorable days, with a vehemence that is terrifying. Look across the Pont Alexandre, at the serene gold dome of the Invalides, surrounded by its sleepy barracks. Suddenly you are in the fire and awful slaughter of Napoleon's

wars. The flower of France is being pitilessly cut down, for the lust of one man's ambition ; and when that is spent, and the wail of the widowed country pierces heaven with its desolation, a costly asylum is built for the handful of soldiers who are left—and the great Emperor has done his duty !

Or you are walking through the Cité, past the court of the Palais de Justice. You glance in, carelessly—memory rushes upon you—and the court flows with blood, "so that men waded through it, up to the knees !" In the tiny stone-walled room yonder, Marie-Antoinette sits disdainfully composed before her keepers : though her face is white with the sounds she hears, as her friends and followers are led out to swell that hideous river of blood.

A pretty, artificial city, Paris : good for shopping, and naughty amusements, now and then. History ? Oh yes, of course ; but all that's so dry and uninspiring, and besides it happened so long ago.

Did it ? In your stroll along the Rue Royale, among the jewellers' and milliners' shops and Maxim's, glance up at the Madeleine, down to the obelisk in the Place de la Concorde. Little over a hundred years ago, this was the brief distance between life and death, for those who one minute were dancing in the "Temple of Victory," the next were laying their heads upon the block of the guillotine. Can you see, beyond the shadowy grey

pillars of the Temple, that brilliant circling throng within? The reckless-laughing ballet girl in her shrine as "Goddess," her worshippers treading their wild measures among the candles and crucifixes and holy images, as though they are pursued! Look—a grim presence is at the door. He enters, lays a heavy hand upon the shoulder of a young and beautiful dancer. She looks into his face, and smiles. The music never stops, but the dance goes more madly on; as the one demanded makes a low *révérence*, then rising, throws a kiss over her shoulder to her comrades who in turn salute her; calls a gay "Adieu!" and with the smile still terrible upon her lips—is gone.

Ah, but the French are different now, you say. Those were the aristocrats, the *vieille noblesse*; these modern Republicans are of another breed. And yet the same blood flows in their veins, the same scornful courage animates them—who, for example, leads the world in aviation?—and on days like the fourteenth of July (the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille), the common people at least show a patriotism no less fiery if less ferocious than they showed in 1789. Let us see if they are so different, after all.

The first charge against the French invariably is that of artificiality. Anglo-Saxons admit them to be charming, of a delightful wit and keen intelligence; but, they immediately add, how deep does it

AN OPEN-AIR BALL ON THE 14TH JULY.

go? Superficially, the Parisian is vastly agreeable; courteous to the point of extravagance, an accomplished conversationalist, even now and then with a flash of the profound. Probe him, and what do you find? A cynical, world-weary degenerate, who will laugh at you when your back is turned, and make love to your wife before your very eyes!

And why not? I, for one, am highly pleased at the compliment to my good taste. It is when he begins to make love behind one's back that one should beware of one's French friend; for he is a finished artist at the performance, and women know it, and are prepared in advance to be subdued. He is by no means a degenerate, however, the average Frenchman; he has to work too hard, and besides he has not the money degeneracy costs. He may have his *petite amie*, generally he has; but quite as generally she is a wholesome, well-behaved little person,—a dressmaker in a small way, or *vendeuse* in a shop—content to drink a bock with him in the evening, at their favourite café, and on Sundays to hang on his arm during their excursion to St. Germain or Meudon. Just as a very small percentage of New Yorkers are those who dwell in Wall Street and corner stocks, so a very small percentage of Parisians are those who feed *louis* to night restaurants and carouse till morning with riotous *demi-mondaines*.

It is a platitude that foreigners are the ones who support the immoral resorts of Paris; yet no foreigner seems to care to remember the platitude. The best way to convince oneself of it for ever is to visit a series of these places, and take honest note of their personnel. The employés will be found to be French; but ninety-eight per cent. of the patrons are English, German, Italian, Spanish, and North and South American. The retort is made, that nevertheless the Parisians started such establishments in the first place. They did; but only after the stranger had brought his crude sensuality to their variety theatres and night cafés, stripping the first of their racy wit, the second of their rollicking *bonhomie*—taking note only of the license underlying both, and blatantly revelling in it. Then it was that the ever-alert commercial sense of the Frenchmen awoke to a new method of making money out of foreigners; and the vulgar night-restaurant of to-day had its beginning.

But not only in the matter of degeneracy is the common analysis of the Parisian open to refutation; his inveterate cynicism also comes up for doubt. The attitude that leads to this mistaken conclusion on the part of those not well acquainted with French character, is more or less the attitude of every instinctively dramatic nature, a kind of impersonal detachment, which causes the individual to appreciate

situations and events first as bits of drama, *then* in their relation to himself. Thus during the recent scandal of the motor bandits, I have heard policemen laugh heartily at some clever trick of evasion on the part of the criminals; only to see them turn purple with rage the next minute, at the victory won over their own intelligence.

A better example is the story of the little *midinette* who, though starving, would not yield to her former *patron* (desirous also of being her lover), and whom the latter shot through the heart as she was hurrying along the Quai Passy late at night. "*Quel phenomène!*" she exclaimed, with a faint shrug, as her life ebbed away in the corner *brasserie*; "to be shot, while on the way to drown oneself—*c'est inouï!*" The next moment she was dead. And all she had to say was, "What a phenomenon—it's unheard of!"

Is this cynicism? Or is it not rather the characteristic impersonality of the histrionic temper, which causes the artist even in death to gaze at herself and at the scene, as it were from the critical vantage of the wings? And the light shrug—which so often grounds the idea of heartlessness, or simply of shallow frivolity, in the judgment of the stranger—look closer, and you will see it hiding a brave stoicism that this race of born actors makes every effort to conceal. The French throughout embody so complex

a combination of Latin ardour, Spartan endurance, and Greek ideality, as to render them extremely difficult of any but the most superficial comprehension. They laugh at things that make other people shudder; they take fire at things that leave other people cold; they burn with a white flame for beauties other people never see. As a great English writer has said, "Below your level, they're above it: —and a paradox is at home with them!"

But I do not think that they are always ridiculing the foreigner, when the latter is uncomfortably conscious of their smiling glance upon him. There are travelling types at whom every one laughs, and these delight the Frenchman's keen humour; but the ordinary stranger has become so commonplace to Paris, that unless he or she is especially distinguished no one takes any notice. Here, however, we have in a nutshell the reason for that smile that sometimes irritates the foreigner: it is often a smile of pure admiration. The great artist's eye knows no distinction of nationality or an iota of provincial prejudice. When it lights upon ugliness, it is disgusted—or amused, if the ugliness has a touch of the comic; when, on the other hand, it lights upon beauty—and how instant it is, to spy out the most obscure trait of this—enthusiasm is kindled, regardless of kind or race, and the *vif* French features break into a smile of pleased appreciation.

Here, he would say, is some one who contributes to the scene; some one who helps to make, not mar, the radiant *ensemble* we are striving for.

Paris, as no other city in the world, offers a play-house of brilliant and charming *mise-en-scène*; and gives the visitor subtly to understand that she expects him to live up to it. Otherwise she has no interest in him. For the well-tailored Englishman, the striking *Américaine*, for any one and every one who can claim title to that supreme quality, *chic*, Paris is ready to open her arms and cry kinship. Those whom she favours, however, are held strictly to the mark of her fine standard of the exquisite; and if they falter, oblivion.

"I am never in Paris two hours," said an American lady to me, "before I begin to perk and prink, and furbish up everything I have. One feels that each man and woman in the street knows the very buttons of one's gloves, and quality of one's stockings, and that every detail of one's costume *must* be right." Many people have voiced the same impression: as of being consciously and constantly "on view"—before observers keenly critical. The curtain seems to rise on oneself alone in the centre of the stage, and never to go down until the last pair of those appraising eyes has passed on.

It is a very different appraisement, however,

from the "inventory stare" of Fifth Avenue. Here, not money value, but beauty of line, blend of colour, grace, *verve*, is the criterion. And the modestly gowned little *midinette* receives as many admiring glances as the gorgeous *demi-mondaine*, if only she has contrived an original cut to her frock, or tied a clever, new kind of bow to her hat. Novelty, novelty, is the cry of the exacting *artiste*; and who obeys, wins approval—who has exhausted imagination, is laid upon the shelf.

But again, this is not the shifting, impermanent temper of Madame New York; it is the fickle variability of the great artist, exercising her eternal prerogative: caprice. She accepts a fashion one week, discards it the next for a newer; throws that aside two days later, and demands to know where every one's ideas have gone. It is not that she is pettish, but simply that she is used to being slaved for and to being pleased—by something different, something more charming every hour. Infinite pains are taken to produce the merest trifle she may fancy. Look from your window into the rows of windows up and down the street, or that line your court: everywhere people are sewing, fitting minute bits of delicate stuffs into a pattern, threading tiny pearls to make a border, straining their eyes in dark work-rooms, toiling indefatigably—to create some fragile, lovely thing that will be snatched up, worn

once or twice, and tossed aside, forgotten for the rest of time.

Yet no one of the workers seems to grow impatient or disheartened over this; the faces bent absorbedly over their tasks are bright with interest, alert, and full of eagerness to make something that will captivate the difficult mistress, if only for an hour. They may never see her—when she comes to inspect their handiwork, they are shut behind a dingy door; at best, they may only catch a glimpse of her as she enters her carriage, or sweeps past them outside some brilliant theatre of her pleasure. But one cries to another: "She's wearing my fichu!" The other cries back: "And I draped her skirt!" And supreme contentment illumines each face, for each has helped towards the goddess's perfection—and they are satisfied.

As I heard one unimportant little *couturière* remark, "*Dieu merci*, in Paris we *all* are artists!" And so they all are responsible for the finished success of the "star." One cannot help contrasting this ideal that animates the most insignificant of them—the ideal of sheer beauty, towards which they passionately toil to attain—with the stolid "what-do-I-get-out-of-it" attitude of the Anglo-Saxon artisan. French working people are poorly paid, they have little joy in life beyond the joy of what they create with their fingers; yet there is about

them a fine contentment, an almost radiance, that is inspiring only to look upon. When they do have a few francs for pleasure, you will find them at the *Français* or the *Odéon*—the best to be had is their criterion; and when the theatres are out of their reach, on Sundays and holidays they crowd the galleries and museums, exchanging keenly intelligent comment as they scrutinize one masterpiece after another.

The culture of the nation, at least, is not artificial, but deep-rooted as no other race can claim: in the poorest *ouvrier*, no less than in the most polished gentleman, there exists the insatiable instinct for what is fine, and worthy to be assimilated. And if the prejudiced concede this, perhaps, but add that it remains an intellectual instinct always—an artistic instinct, while the heart of French people is callous and cold; one may suggest that there are two kinds of artists: those who give away their hearts in their art, and those who jealously hide theirs, lest the vulgar tear it to pieces.

And the *great* artiste, however gracious she may be for us, however kind may be her smile, never lets us forget that we are before a curtain, which, though she may draw it aside and give us brief glimpses of her wonder, conceals some things too precious to be shown.

## II

### ON HER EVERYDAY PERFORMANCE

SIGHT-SEEING in Paris must be like looking at the Venus of Milo on a roll of cinematograph films—an experience too harrowing to be remembered. I am sure it is the better part of discretion to forswear Baedeker, and without system just to "poke round." Thus one catches the artists between acts, in the multiform moods of their life as ordinary beings; and stumbles across historic wonders enough, into the bargain.

Really to take Paris unawares, one must get up in the morning before she does, and slip out into the street when the white-bloused baker's boy and a sleepy *cocher* or two, with their drowsy, dawdling horses, are all the life to be seen. One walks along the empty boulevards, down the quiet Rue de la Paix, into the stately serenity of the Place Vendôme, and on across the shining Seine into the grey, ancient stillness of the crooked Rue du Bac. And in this early morning calm, of solitary spaces and clear sunshine, fresh-sprinkled streets and gently fluttering trees, one meets with a new and altogether

different Paris from the dazzling, exotic city one knows by day and at night.

Absent is the snort and reckless rush of motors, the insistent jingling of tram and horses' bells, the rumble of carts and clip-clop of the Norman stallions' feet; absent the hurrying, kaleidoscopic throngs who issue from the Métro stations, and fill the thoroughfares; absent even that familiar smell-of-the-city, which in Paris is a fusion of gasolene, wet asphalt, and the faint fragrance of women's *sachets*: this virgin morning peace is without odour, save the odour of fresh leaves, without noise, without the bustle of moving people. The city stretches its broad arms north and south, east and west, like a serene woman in the embrace of tranquil dreams, and suggests a soft and beautiful repose.

But while still you are drinking deep of it, she stirs—opens her eyes. A distant cry is heard: "*E-e-eh, pommes de terre-eeh!*" And then another, "*Les petites fraises du bois! Les petites fraises!*" And the cries come nearer, and there is the sound of steps and the creak of a hand-cart, and Paris rubs her eyes and wakes up—she must go out and buy potatoes!

The same fat, brown-faced woman with the same two dogs—one pulling the cart, one running fussily alongside—has sold potatoes in the same streets round the Vendôme ever since I can remember.

For years her lingering vibrant cry has roused this part of Paris to the first sign of day. And while she is making change, and gossiping with the *concièrge*, and the smaller dog is sniffing impatiently round her skirts, windows are opened, gratings groan up, at the corner some workmen call to one another—and the day is begun.

While the streets are still comparatively empty, let us follow the first abroad—the little *midinette* and her mother—to mass. They will choose one of the old, unfashionable churches, like St. Roch or La Trinité, though on Sundays they go to the Madeleine to hear the music, and revel in splendid pomp and pageantry. France at heart is agnostic; a nation of fatalists, if anything. But the vivid French imagination is held in thrall by the colour and mystic ritual of the Catholic Church; by the most perfect, in ceremonial and satisfying detail, of all religions. When the curtain rises on the full magnificence of gorgeous altar, golden-robed bishop and officiating priests; when in accompaniment to the sonorous *Aves*, exquisite music peals forth, and the whole is blended, melted together by the soft light of candles, the subtle haze of incense: into French faces comes that ecstasy with which they greet the perfect in all its manifestations. They are *dévotes* of beauty in the religious as in every other sense.

But now our *midinette* and her *maman* enter a dusky unpretentious old church, where quietly they say their prayers and listen to the monotonous chanting of a single priest, reading matins in a little corner chapel. The two women cross themselves, and go out. In the *Place* the younger one stops to spend twopence for a spray of *muguet*—that delicate flower that is the special property of the *midinettes* of Paris, and that they love. On their Saint Catherine's Day (May 1st), no girl is without a little bunch of it as a "*porte-bonheur*" for her love affairs during the next year.

But the *midinette* calls, "*Au voir*"; and the *maman* returns, "*à ce soir!*" And they disappear, the one to her shop, the other to her duties as *concièrge* or store-keeper; and we are left in the *Place*, alone. What about coffee? Let us take it here at the corner *brasserie*, where the old man with his napkin tucked in his chin is crumbling *croissants* and muttering imprecations at the government—which he attacks through the *Matin* or *Figaro* spread upon his knees. A young man, with melancholy black moustaches and orange boots, is the only other client at this early hour. He refuses to eat, though a *café complet* is before him; and looks at his watch, and sighs. We know what is the matter with *him*.

Considerate of the lady who is late, we choose a

table on the other side—all are outdoors, of course, in this springtime of the year—and devote ourselves to discussing honey and rolls and the season's styles in hosiery; which young persons strolling towards the boulevards benevolently offer for our inspection. Occasionally they pause, and graciously inquire if we "have need of some one?" And on our replying—with the proper mixture of apology and admiration—that all our wants seem to be attended to, pass on with a shrug of resignation.

Motor buses are whirring by now, and a maze of *fiacres*, taxis, delivery-boy's bicycles, and heavy trucks skid round the slippery corner in dangerous confusion. The traffic laws of Paris are of the vaguest, and policemen are few and far between; all at once, the *Place* seems unbearably thick and full of noise. We call for our *addition*, exchange complaisances with the waiter, and depart—just as the young man with the orange boots, with a cry of "*Enfin!*" tucks the hand of a bewitchingly pretty young lady (doubtless a mannequin) within his arm, and starts towards the Rue de la Paix.

The Rue de la Paix at half-past nine in the morning does not intrigue us. We prefer to wait for it until the sensational *heure des rendez-vous* in the evening. Why not jump into a cab, and bowl leisurely out to the Bois? It will be cool there, and quiet during the hour before the fashionable *cavaliers*

come to ride. With a wary eye for a horse of reasonable solidity, we engage a blear-eyed Gaul to tow us to the Porte Dauphine. We like this Gaul above other Gauls, because his anxious flop-eared dog sitting next him on the box gives every sign of liking him. And though, even before we have turned into the Champs Élysées, there have been three blood-curdling rows between cabby and various colleagues who presumed to occupy a place in the same street; though whips have been brandished and such ferocious epithets as "brother-in-law of a bantam!" "son of a pigeon-toed hen!" have been brandished without mercy by our remorseless Jehu, we take the reassuring word of his dog's worshipping brown eyes, that he is not a bad sort after all.

He drives us along the Champs Élysées at a smart pace; yet we have time to gloat over the beauties of this loveliest of all avenues; its spacious gardens, its brilliant flower-plots, its quaint little *guignols* and donkey carriages for children. Venders of every sort of jumping bunny and squeaking pig thread in and out the shady trees, showing their fascinating wares; and one does not wonder at the swarm of small people with their bright-ribboned nurses, who flock round to admire—and to buy.

This part of the avenue—from the Concorde to the Rond-Point—is given over to children; and all kinds of amusements, wise and unwise, are

prepared for them. But by far the most popular are the *guignols*: those theatres-in-little, where Punch and Judy go through their harassing adventures, to the accompaniment of "*C'est joli, ça!*" and "*Tiens, que c'est chic!*"; uttered by enthusiastic small French throats, seconded by applauding small French hands. For even the babies have their appreciation for the drama that is offered them before they can talk; and show it so spontaneously, yet emphatically, that one is arrested by their vehemence and the significance of it.

But we can take in all these things only in passing, for Jehu and the flop-eared dog are carrying us on up the suavely mounting avenue, beyond the haughty portals of fashionable hotels and automobile houses *de luxe*; round the stately Arc de Triomphe, and into the Avenue du Bois. Here a sprinkling of governesses and their charges, old ladies, and lazy young men are ranged along the stiff luxury of penny chairs. On a Sunday we might stop and take one ourselves, to watch the parade of toilettes and the lively Parisian *jeunesse* at its favourite game of "*faire le flirt*"; but this morning the terrace is half asleep, and above it the houses of American millionaires and famous ladies of the *demi-monde* turn forbidding closed shutters to our inquiring gaze. Jehu speeds us

past them, and we alight at the Porte Dauphine, the principal entrance to the Bois.

Green grass, the glint of a lake, broad, sandy roads and intimate slim *allées* greet us, once within the gates; while all round and overhead are the slender, grey-green French poplars, fashioned into gracious avenues and seductive pathways, each with its gay little restaurant at the end. Of all styles and architecture are these last: Swiss châlets, Chinese pagodas, Japanese tea-houses, and the typical French *pavillon*: they have one common trait, however—that of serving atrocious food at a fabulous price. Let us abjure them, and wander along the quiet expansive lake, to the rocks and miniature falls of *Les Rochers*.

All through the Bois, one is struck with the characteristic French passion for vistas. There is none of the natural wildness of Central Park, or the uninterrupted sweep of green fields that gives the charm of air and openness to the parks of London; but—though here in Paris we are in a "wood"—everywhere there is the elaborate simplicity of French landscape gardening: trees cut into tall Gothic arches, or bent into round, tunnel-like curves; brush trimmed precisely into formal box hedges; paths leading into avenues, that in turn lead into other avenues—so that before, behind, and on every side there is that prolonged silver-

grey perspective. One sees the same thing at Meudon and St. Cloud—in every French forest for that matter. The artist cannnot stay her hand, even for the hand of nature.

And so in the Bois, rocks have been built into grottos, and trickling waterfalls trained to form cascades above them; and little lakes and islands have been inserted—everything, anything, that the artistic imagination could conceive, to enhance the sylvan scene for the critical folk who frequent it. Which reminds us that these last will be on view now—it is eleven o'clock, their hour for riding and the promenade. So let us leave *Les Rochers*, and the greedy goats of the *Pré Catalan*, and hasten back to the Avenue des Acacias and the famous *Sentier de Vertu*.

Here, a *chic* procession of *élégantes* and their admirers are strolling along, laughing and chatting as they come upon acquaintances, forming animated little groups, only to break up and wander on to join others. *Cavaliers* in smart English coats, or the dashing St. Cyr uniform, canter by; calling gay greeting to friends, for whose benefit they display an elaborately careless bit of clever horsemanship *en passant*. Ladies and "half-ladies" in habits of startling yet somehow alluring cut and hue—heliotrope and brick pink are among the favourites—allow their mounts to saunter lazily along the

*allées*, while their own modestly veiled eyes spy out prey. They are viewed with severity by the *bonne bourgeoise* of the tortoise-shell lorgnette and heavy moustache; who keeps her limousine within impressive calling distance, while she, with her fat poodle under her arm, waddles along ogling the beaux.

A doughty regiment of these there are: young men with marvellous waists and eager, searching eyes; middle-aged men with figures "well-preserved," and eyes that make a desperate effort at eagerness, but only succeed in looking tired; and then the old gallants—waxed and varnished, and gorgeously immaculate, from sandy toupee to gleaming pointed shoes—the three hours they have spent with the barber and in the scrupulous hands of their valet, have not been in vain. They do the honours of the *Sentier*, with a courtliness that brings back Louis Quatorze and the days of Ninon and the lovely Montespan.

But there are as lovely—and perhaps as naughty (?)—ladies among those who saunter leisurely down the grey-green paths to-day. In wonderfully simple, wonderfully complicated *toilettes de matin*, they stroll along in pairs—or again (with an oblique glance over the shoulder, oh a quite indifferent glance), carelessly alone with two or three little dogs. I read last week in one of the French

illustrated papers a serious treatise on ladies' dogs. It was divided into the three categories: "Dogs for morning," "Dogs for afternoon," "Dogs of ceremony"—meaning full-dress dogs, I suppose. And the article gravely discussed the correct canine accessory that should be worn with each separate costume of the *élégante's* elaborate day. It omitted to add, however, the incidental value of these costly scraps of fuzz, as chaperones. But with a couple of dogs, as one pretty lady softly assured me, one can go anywhere, feeling quite secure; and one's husband, too—for, of course, he realizes that the sweet little beast *must* be exercised!

So the conscientious ladies regularly "exercise" them; and if sometimes, in their exuberance, Toto and Mimi escape their distressed young mistresses, and must be brought back by a friend who "chanced" to be near at hand—who can cavil? And if the kind restorer walks a little way with the trio he has reunited, or sits with them for a few moments under the trees, why not? They are always three—Toto and Mimi and the lady—and one's friends who may happen to pass know for themselves how hard dogs are to keep in hand!

So we have a series of gay, well-dressed couples wandering down the intimate *allées* or scattered in the white iron chairs within the trees: a very different series from those who will be here at eleven

o'clock to-night—and every night. The Bois is far too large to be policed, and the grotesque shapes that haunt it after dark—crouching, low-browed figures that slink along in the shadows, greedy for any sort of prey—make one shudder, even from the security of a closed cab. All about are the brilliant, bright-lit restaurants with their crowds of feasting sybarites; yet at the very door of these—waiting to fall upon them if they take six steps beyond the threshold—is that grisly, desperate band, some say of Apaches, others say of monsters worse than these.

At all events, it is better in the evening to turn one's eyes away from the shadowy paths, and towards the amusing tableaux to be seen in passing *fiacres* and taxis. To the more reserved Anglo-Saxon, French frankness of demonstration in affairs of the affections comes always as a bit of a shock. To see a lady reclining against the arm of a gentleman, as the two spin along the boulevard in an open horse-cab; to watch them, quite oblivious of the world looking on, ardently turn and kiss one another: this is a disturbing and meanly provocative scene to put before the susceptible but miserably shy Englishman. No one else pays attention to it—they have acted that scene so many times, themselves; and when in the friendly darkness of the Bois at night, all lingering discretion is thrown to the winds, and behind the cabby's broad, habituated back, anything

and everything in he way of fervid love-making goes on—who cares? Except to smile sympathetically, and return to his own affair, more ardent than ever. The silhouettes one sees against taxi-windows and the dust-coloured cushions of *fiacres*, are utterly demoralizing to respectable British virtue.

Let us turn on the light of day, therefore, and in a spasm of prudence mount a penny bus that traffics between the Étoile and the Latin Quarter. It is a flagrant *faux-pas* to arrive in the Latin Quarter by way of anything more sumptuous than a penny bus or a twopenny tram. It shrieks it from the cobbles, that one is a *nouveau*; and that, in the Quarter, is a disgrace too horrible to be endured.

We rock across the Pont Royal, then, on the precarious upper storey of an omnibus; and wind along the narrow Rue du Bac, which, since our visit of early morning, has waked to fitful life in its old plaster and print shops. Second-hand dealers of all kinds flourish here, and the medley of ancient books, musty reliquaries, antique jewellery, and battered images minus such trifles as a nose or ear, make the street into one continuous curiosity-shop Until one reaches the varnish and modern bustle of the Bon Marché stores; then when we have been shot through the weather-beaten slit of the Rue des Saints Pères, I insist that we shall climb down and go on foot up quaint, irregular Notre-Dame-des-Champs to

the garden where I spent many joyous days as a student.

It is in a crooked little street which runs breathlessly for a block between Notre-Dame-des-Champs and the Boulevard Montparnasse—and there stops, leaving you with the insinuation that it has done its best to squeeze in on this frazzled boundary of the old Quarter, and that more cannot be expected of it. On one side of the abrupt block rambles the one-time *hôtel* of the Duchesse de Chevreuse; *intrigante*, *cosmopolitaine*, irresponsible lover of adventure, who kept Louis XIII.'s Court in a hubbub with her pranks and her inordinate influence over Queen Anne.

The grey court that has seen the trysts of Chalais, Louvigni, even of the great Richelieu himself, rests still intact; and they say the traditional secret passages also—leading from a hidden recess in the garden, to the *grand palais*. But that is only legend (which by some vagary still clings to the feelers of the practical twentieth-century mind), and I have never seen it. The *hôtel* is now covered yearly with a neat coat of yellow paint, and used as an apartment house; crowded by the usual rows of little Quarter shops: a cobbler's, a *blanchisserie*, a goldsmith's on the east wing; the beaten-down door of an antiquary on the west: until its outraged painted bricks seem to bulge out over the thread of a side-

walk, in continual effort to rub noses with my crumbling *hôtel meublé* opposite—the only other house of any age, in the street.

One peep at my garden—and you will admit it is worth it, with its lovely plaintive iris, its pale wistaria, its foolish pattering fountain—and we turn towards the Boulevard and lunch. I have said this bit of a street along which we are walking is on the boundary of the old Quarter. Alas, in these days there is no Quarter. One tries to think there is, particularly if one is a new-comer to the Left Bank, and enthusiastic; but one learns all too soon that there is not. There are students, yes, and artists; and the cafés and paint shops and pretty grisettes that go with students and artists. But the Quarter of Rudolph and Mimi, of Trilby and Svengali: can you find it in steam-heated apartments, where ladies in Worth gowns pour tea? Or in the thick blue haze about the bridge and poker games at the Café du Dôme?

The Quarter has passed; there remains only its name. And that we should use with a muttered "forgive us our trespasses"; for it is the name of romance, shifted on to commonplaceness.

Yet one can still enjoy there the romance of a delicious meal for one franc fifty; and there are any number of jealously hidden places from which to choose. Let us go to Henriette's, this tiny hole-in-

the-wall, where one passes the fragrant-steaming kitchen on the way to the little room inside; and calls a greeting to the cook—an old friend—where he stands, lobster-pink and beaming, over his copper saucepans. Back under a patched and hoary skylight, the tables are placed; and a family of mild-mannered mice clamber out over the glass to peer inquiringly at the gluttons below—who eat at one bite enough cheese to keep any decently delicate mouse for a week.

We order an omelette *aux champignons à Chateaubriand* (corresponding to our tenderloin of steak) with *pommes soufflés*; as a separate vegetable, *petits pois à la Française*; and for dessert a heaped-up plate of wild strawberries to be eaten with one of those delectable brown pots of thick *crême d'Isigny* —aih! It makes one exquisitely languid only to think of it, all that luscious food! We lean back voluptuously in our chairs, and gaze about us while waiting for it.

At the half-dozen tables round us are seated the modern prototypes of Rudolph and Mimi: mildly boisterous American youths from the Beaux Arts and Julien's; careworn English spinsters with freckles and paint-smudged fingers; a Russian couple, with curious "shocked" hair and vivid, roving black eyes; a stray Frenchman or two, probably shop-keepers from the Boulevard; and a

trio of models—red-lipped, torrid-eyed, sinuously round, in their sheath-fitting tailored skirts and cheap blouses. They are making a nonchalant meal off bread and cheese, and a bottle of *vin ordinaire*: evidently times are bad, or "*ce bon garçon* Harry's" remittance has not come.

Proof of other bad times is in the charming frieze painted in commemoration of the Queen of Hearts, by two girl artists of a former day, who worked out their over-due bill to the house in this decorative fashion. For poverty, at least, of the traditional Quarter, survives; though smothered into side streets and obscure passages, by the self-styled "Bohemians" of Boulevards Raspail and Montparnasse. And one notices that the habitués of Henriette's and of all the humbler restaurants have their own napkin-rings which they take from the rack as they come in: does it not save them ten centimes, an entire penny, on the charge for *couvert*?

They have their own tobacco, too, and roll their cigarettes with care not to spill a single leaf at the process; and we feel like heartless Dives to sit smoking our fragrant Egyptians after our luxurious meal (for two francs ten!), and sipping golden Bénédictine at the considerable price of forty centimes. Our more frugal neighbours, however, show no sign of envy, or indeed of interest of any sort; their careless indifference, not only to us,

but to their own meal and the desultory chatter of their comrades, speaks of long and familiar experience with both. Somehow they are depressing, these Rudolphs without their velveteens, these Mimis without their flowers and other romantic trappings of poverty; their hideous modern garments of the shabbily genteel only emphasize a sordid lack of petty cash.

I suggest that we run away from them, and hie us to the lilac-bushes and bewitching *bébés* of the Jardin du Luxembourg; for in the realm of the great *artiste* even the babies contribute to the scene, and in their fascinating short frocks and wee rose-trimmed bonnets are a gladsome troupe of Lilliputians with whom to while away one's melancholy. But you may have an inhuman apathy towards babies, and prefer to taxi out to St. Germain for a view of the terrace, and a glimpse *en route* of sadly lovely Malmaison—the memory-haunted home of Josephine. Or you may suggest the races—though I hope you won't, because in France the sport is secondary; and mannequins are a dull race. I had rather you chose an excursion up the Seine, on one of the fussy little river-boats; though, of course, at St. Cloud we should be sure to find a blaring street-fair in possession of the forest, and at Meudon the same: the actors must bring their booths and flying pigs into the very domain of Dame Nature

herself; being no respecters of congruity where their passion for the theatric is concerned.

But we should have the cool vistas of the inner forest, and the stately historic stone stairs and mellow cream-grey urns and statues through the trees; or we can go down the river instead to old Vincennes, and have a look at the grim prison-castle that has sheltered many a noble in disgrace. Which shall it be? To use Madame La France's borrowed Spanish expression: I am "*tout à votre disposition.*"

## III

### AND ITS SEQUEL

WHICHEVER it is, we must be back in time for tea at one of the fashionable "*five-o'clocks*"; for, though many ladies who buy their clothes in Paris do not know it, looking at *grandes dames* is vastly different from looking at mannequins or the *demi-monde*,—and the *grande dame de Paris* is at her best in her *robe de l'heure du thé*.

I remember years ago, when I first went to Paris, being atonished at a friend of mine who constantly broke off our conversation in the street to dash over to a window and eagerly examine some hat or bit of fluffy feminine finery. Sometimes he would haul me with him by main force, to gaze and admire; and when I testily inquired if he had gone quite mad or was still within rescue-distance, he laughed exasperatingly: "Just wait—you'll be doing it in a week! I was lofty too, at first, and laughed at the fellows who gaped in windows and raved over certain hats. But it wasn't ten days before I was worse than any of them. You can't help it in Paris: line, *chic*, colour, the masterly *ensemble*,—it's in the air we

breathe, it's what every man, woman, and child about us is breathing, eating, drinking; and you might as well try to escape the measles when every other boy in school has 'em. Just wait."

I hadn't the resistance to wait. That very day I tumbled, fell head foremost off my bland superiority, into the ranks of the hopelessly insane. A girl's sleeve did it—sounds silly, but you see, it wasn't the ordinary kind of sleeve. It was really three sleeves: first a grey one—blue-grey, like cigarette smoke when it curls off into mist; then another grey one—same kind of stuff, supple and very thin (*ninon*, I've since learned they call it); then, next the skin, still another, of delicate flesh-pink—that made those three sleeves in one seem actually part of the girl's soft arm, finely visible within them.

I don't remember ever to have noticed a sleeve before, but I sat next this one—and it was all over. I've noticed every sleeve on every woman since; not only that, but I began to notice ruches, frills of lace, little clusters of half-hidden flowers—all the subtle details by which the Parisienne calls attention to, and then tantalizingly conceals, the beauties of her figure. It is at the tea-rooms that one is shown the perfection of her art; for as some one has rightly said, the American woman is the best-dressed in the morning, the Englishwoman the best-dressed at night, but the Parisienne triumphs

over both in the gracious, clinging gown of afternoon.

Let us turn into this exclusive little establishment in the Place Vendôme, and from the snug vantage of a window-table in the mezzanine, observe the lovely ladies as they leave their motors and come in. The first to alight is in the simplest frock of leaf-green—I am sure an American woman would dub it "positively *plain*"; for there is not a sign of real lace or hand embroidery about it, only at the open throat a soft fall of finest net, snowy white as few American women (or any others) would take the pains to have it. And the lady's hair is warm copper, and her hat a mere ingenious twist of leaf-brown tulle; but a master hand has draped it, and the simple frock of green, and the whole is a beautiful blend of line and colour that looks as unstudied as a bit of autumn woodland.

Here is a combination more *frappant*. The lady just stepping from the pansy limousine has chosen yellow for her costume of shimmering crêpe; a rich, dull ochre, with a hint of red in its flowing folds. At the neck and wrists are bits of fragile old embroidery, yellow too with age and that melt into the flesh-tones of the wearer till they seem part of her living self; while at the slim waist-line is a narrow band of dusky rose—the kind of rose that looks faintly coated with silver—and daringly

caught up high at the right side, a single mauve petunia. The hat, of course, is black—a mere nothing of a tiny toque, with one spray of filmy Paradise low against the lady's blond hair.

"But she is not pretty at all," you realise suddenly; "she's really almost ugly, and yet——"

Exactly. A Frenchwoman can be as ugly as it pleased perverse Heaven to make her; there is always the "and yet" of her overwhelming charm. You may call it artificial if you like—the mere material allurements of stuffs and bits of thread; but to arrange those stuffs there must be a fine discrimination; to know how to use those bits of thread, a subtle science no other woman has—or ever quite acquires. Look about you in the tea-room—now fast filling with women of all ages and all tastes; what is it that forms their great general attraction? White hands, shown to perfection by a fall of delicate lace, or the gleam of a single big emerald or sapphire; hands moving daintily among fragile china, the sheen of silver, the transparency of glass. And above the hands, *vif* faces, set in the soft coquetry of snowy ruches, graceful fichus, piquant Medici collars, but all open upon the alluring V of creamy throat.

What is it these women have? You can set down what they have on, but what is it you cannot set down, yet that you know they possess? It is

the art of supreme femininity, carried out in the emphasis of every charm femininity has; by means of contrast, colour, above all by the subtlest means in everything: simplicity. And there is added to their conscious art a pervading delicate voluptuousness that underlies the every expression of themselves as women, and that completes the havoc of the male they subjugate.

Look at him now. Do you know any man but an Englishman who *likes* tea? Yet here they are, these absinthe-ridden Frenchmen, drinking it with a fervour; but their eyes are not within the cups! For again the highly proper little dogs are present —"dogs for the afternoon," of course; and the management has surely been thoughtful in providing discreet corners and deep window-seats, where a *tête-à-tête* may be enjoyed without too many interruptions on the part of the *chic* waitress with a windward eye to tips.

I believe another precaution these abandoned couples take is a third person—usually a young girl friend—to be with them. Madame starts out with the young girl, by chance they meet Monsieur X at the five-o'clock, and have tea with him; of course, he escorts the ladies home, and equally, of course, the young girl is "dropped" first. If between her house and Madame's, the better part of an hour is employed in threading the tangled

L'HEURE DU RENDEZ-VOUS. RUE DE LA PAIX.

traffic of that time of evening, who can say a word except the chauffeur?—who is given no reason to regret his long-suffering silence on such subjects. Thus during the hour after tea, the hour between six and seven, when kindly dusk lends her cloak to the game, husbands and wives play at their eternal trick of outwitting one another.

It may be a game that disgusts you, you may find it sordid, even repellent to watch; but among people with whom the marriage of convenience is universal (and in most respects turns out excellently well), what can you expect? A lover or a divorce, for both parties; and the French man and woman prefer to maintain the stability of house and the name, and to wink at one another's individual peccadilloes. They are generally very good friends, and devoted to their children; and never, never do they commit that crassness of the Anglo-Saxon, who has no sensitiveness about bringing his amours within his home.

So let us watch the departing couples whirl away from the little tea-room, without too great severity; and ourselves wander out into the Place, and up the short spectacular Rue de la Paix. This above all others is the hour to see it—when fashion throngs the narrow pavements, or bowls slowly past in open motor cars; and when the courts of the great dressmakers' shops are filled with young blades,

waiting for the mannequins to come down. One by one, these marvellously slim, marvellously apparelled young persons appear; each choosing the most effective moment she can contrive for her particular entrance into the twilight of the street. A silken hum of skirts precedes her; the swains in the doorway eagerly look up—adjust their scarf-pins, give a jauntier tilt to their top-hats—and the apparition, sweetly smiling and emphatically perfumed, is among them.

There are murmured greetings, a suggestion from two of the bolder of the beaux, a gracious assent from the lady; and the three spin away in a taxi, to Armenonville or Château Madrid, for dinner. They have a very pleasant life, these mannequins; for lending the figures the *bon Dieu* gave them—or that they painstakingly have acquired—they receive excellent salaries from the great *couturiers*. In consideration of which, they appear at the establishment when they please, or not at all, when they have the caprice to stay away. If the figure is sufficiently remarkable, there is no limit to the whims they can enjoy—and be pardoned, even eagerly implored to return to their deserted posts. And then, as we see, after professional hours—what pleasaunce of opportunity! What boundless possibilities of *la vie chic*! Really, saith the ex-*midinette* complacently, it is good to have become a mannequin.

Some there are who at this excellent business-hour of evening make a preoccupied exit; sweep past the disappointed gentlemen in waiting, and walk swiftly towards the maze and glitter of the boulevard. The gentlemen shrug, comprehending. A *rendez-vous*. Out of idle curiosity, one of them may follow. "*Mais, ma chère!*" he murmurs reproachfully, at sight of the ill-restored antiquity the lady annexes at the corner.

She makes a deprecatory little face over her shoulder; which says, "You ought to understand, one must be practical. But what about to-morrow night?" And a bit of pasteboard flutters from her gold purse, and at the feet of the reproachful gentleman; who smiles, picks it up, reads it, shrugs, and strolls back to his doorway, to find other extravagance for this evening.

What a Paris! you exclaim; is there anything in it beside the *rendez-vous*? Not at this hour. For mechanics and *midinettes*, bank-clerks and *vendeuses*, shop-keepers and ever-thrifty daughters of joy, pour into the boulevards in a human flood; and, always following Biblical example, they go two by two. In another hour they will be before their *croûte-au-pot*, in one of the omnipresent *cafés*; for the present they anxiously wait on corners, or with a relieved smile link arms and move off at an absorbed, lingering gait down the boulevard.

Some halt, to sit down at the little tables on the side-walk, and drink an *apéritif*. Here, too, the old dogs of commerce and industry get together over a *Pernod* or a *Dubonnet*, and in groups of twos and threes heatedly thrash out the unheard-of fluctuations of the Bourse to-day. The *bon bourgeois* meets his wife, and hears of the children's cleverness, the servants' perfidy, over a *sirop*; two anæmic young government clerks gulp *Amer Picon*, and violently contradict one another over the situation in Morocco; a well-known *danseuse* sips vermouth with the long-haired youth who directs the orchestra at the Folies Bergères: it is as though, between six and seven, all Paris is strung along outside the *cafés* that link the boulevard into a chain of chairs and tables. And in the street, down the middle, motor-buses honk their horns, horse-buses crack their whips, *cochers* and chauffeurs shout anathema to one another and malediction on policemen and the human worm in general; while the traffic thickens and crawls slower with every minute, and a few helpless *gendarmes* struggle in vain to preserve order.

Let us out of it all, and to dine. We can go to Château Madrid, and eat under the trees, and watch the gorgeous Parisiennes in the gallery as instinctively they group themselves to lend heightened effect to the *ensemble*; or we can go to Paillard's and pay two pounds apiece for the privilege of sitting

against the wall and consuming such sauces as never were in Olympus or the earth beneath; or we can dine above the gardens of the *Ambassadeurs*, in the elegant little balcony that overhangs a miniature stage, and later look on at the *révue*. Or we can sail up the river in the balmy gloaming, and eat a *friture* of smelts on the *terrasse* of the *Pêche Miraculeuse*—there are a score of places where we can find a delicious meal, and in each observe a different world; running from *do* to *do* in the scale of the race.

I suggest, however, that we choose a *café* in the Quarter—not one of the tiny eating-houses like Henriette's where we lunched, but a full-fledged, prosperous *café*, frequented by the better-off artists and the upper-class Quarter *grisettes*. Ten minutes in the Nord-Sud (the new Underground, a shade less unbearable than the older Métro) lands us at the door of one of the best known of these places. In the front room, with big windows open to the street, is the *café des consommateurs*; in the rear, the restaurant and card-rooms, and a delightful galleried garden, where also one may dine. Alluring strains of Hoffmann's *Barcarolle* entice us thither with all speed; and soon our enthusiasm is divided between chilled slices of golden melon and the caressing sensuousness of the *maître d'orchestre's* violin.

In passing, one may note that good music in Paris is a rare quantity. Though many people come to study singing, there are few vocal concerts, and the *Touche* and the *Rouge* are the only orchestras of any importance. They give weekly concerts in small halls, hardly bigger than an ordinary-sized room, and the handful of attendants smoke their fat porcelain pipes and extract cherries out of glasses of *kirsch* and happily imagine themselves music-lovers. But the great *artiste* is an artist through sight rather than through sound; and even in opera, where the dramatic element is or should be subservient to the music, the super-dramatic French are ill at ease and hampered. Some of the performances at the Opéra Comique are delightful, for here the lighter pieces of Massenet and Debussy are given, with the French lilt and dash peculiar to these masters. But at the Opéra itself, the Wagnerian compositions are poorly conducted, the audience uninterested and uninteresting; and even the beautiful foyer—which since the famous New Year's Eve balls have been done away with, knows no longer its former splendours—cannot compensate for the thoroughly dull evening one endures there.

Far happier is one listening to the serenades and intermezzos of the cherubic Alsatian violinist at the Quarter *café-restaurant*. And after dinner he plays solos out in the *café* proper, for the same absorbed

polyglot audience that has listened to him for years. Let us range ourselves in this corner against the wall, between the two American lady artists of masculine tailoring and Kansas voices, and the fierce-moustachioed Czek, mildly amused over a copy of the *Rire*. Every seat in the big double room is taken now, and we are a varied crew of French *bourgeois*, Russian, Norwegian, and German students, English and American tourists, Japanese attachés (or so one supposes from their conversation in excellent French, with our neighbour Czek), and blond and black bearded artists who might be of any nation except the Oriental.

They all know each other, and are exchanging *blagues* and cigarettes over their *café crême*—which they drink, by the way, out of glass tumblers—and paying good-naturedly for a *bock* for Suzanne or Madeleine, for whose *bocks* some other person should be paying. The room has taken on the look of a big family party,—some talking, some writing letters, others reading from the shiny black-covered comic papers; all smoking, and sipping absently now and then from their steaming glasses or little *verres de liqueur*. The music drifts in soothingly, between spurts of conversation, and one is conscious of utter contentment and well-being. To describe it there is no French word; only the German *gemütlich*.

Suddenly a door is flung open. In whirls a small

hurricane, confined within a royal purple coat and skirt; gives one lightning glance round the circle of surprised merry-makers, and with a triumphant cry pounces on Suzanne yonder, with the fury of a young virago. "So!" pants the vixen, shaking poor Suzanne—but with a *sauvagerie*. "So you thought to outwit me, you thought to oust me, did you? *Me*, whom he knew six months before ever he saw you—me whom he took to Havre, to Fontainebleau, to—to—Traitress! Coward! *Scélérate!* Take that—and that—and that!"

She slaps Suzanne soundly on both cheeks; Suzanne pulls her hat off—each makes a lunge for the other's hair. "*Mesdames—mesdames!*" cries the *patron*, hurrying forward. "*Je vous en prie*,—and, monsieur," reproachfully, "can you do nothing?"

Monsieur—the monsieur who kindly and quite disinterestedly paid Suzanne's bock—sits by, lazily tapping his fingers against the glass. "What would you?" he says, with a shrug. "Women——," another shrug—"one had as well let them finish it."

But the *patron* is by no means of this mind. He begins telling those ladies that his house is a serious house, that his clients are of the most serious, that he himself absolutely demands and insists upon seriousness; and that if these ladies cannot tranquillize themselves instantly. . . .

But of a sudden he halts—pulled up short by

the abrupt halt of the ladies themselves. In the thick of the fray, Suzanne has flung a contemptuous explanation; Gaby, the virago, has caught it. A truce is declared. Curt conversation takes place. Monsieur, still lazily tapping, consents to confirm the defendant's statement as fact. Gaby, though still suspicious, consents to restore the hated rival's hat; and in ten minutes the three are tranquilly discussing Cubism and a new round of *demi-brunes*. The audience, who have gazed on the entire comedy with keen but quite impartial interest, shrug their shoulders, light a fresh cigarette, and return to their papers and pen. Since the first start of surprise, there has not been a murmur among them; only complete concentration on the drama, which the next minute they as completely forget.

There are a dozen such scenes a day, in one's wandering about Paris; that is, a dozen scenes as sudden, as intense, and as quickly over. The everyday life of the people is so vivid, of such swift and varied contrast, that the theatre itself, to satisfy them, must overreach into melodrama before it rouses. I believe that no other city in the world, unless it be the next most dramatic, New York, could support a theatre like the *Grand Guignol*, for example. I have seen there in one evening, gruesomely realistic representations of a plague scene in India; the destruction of a submarine,

with all the crew on board; and the operating-room of a hospital, where a woman is unnecessarily murdered to pay the surgeon's wife's hat bill.

The French imagination, turned loose on dramatic situations, is like a cannibal before a pack of missionaries; only, instead of eating them alive, the Frenchman makes them live—and diabolically accurately.

But not for the doubtful interest of studying French psychology through its horrors shall we end our day by a visit to the *Guignol*. Nor yet to the *Français* or the *Odéon*, as we are a bit tired to follow Molière or Racine to-night. What do you say to looking in at the cheerful rowdyism of the *Moulin*, and then on for a bite at one of the restaurants on "the Hill"? It would never do for you, as a self-respecting foreigner, to leave Paris without properly "doing" Montmartre; and as for me, I want to prove to you my assertion that Montmartre exists for and off visiting strangers like ourselves.

Let us make short work of the *Moulin*, therefore —which is neither more nor less raw than the rest of the *variétés* prepared for foreign consumption— and go on up to the Place Pigalle; to the racket and ribaldry of the *Royal*. Other night-restaurants make some pretence of silver-gilding their vulgarity: the *Abbaye* and the *Rat Mort* have their diamond

dust of luxury to throw into one's eyes. But the *Royal* is unadulterated Montmartre: the girls, most of them, shabby—their rouge put on without art; the harsh red coats of the tziganes seemingly made of paper, and their songs lacking even the thinnest veneer of French wit.

In the small, low room upstairs fresh air is left behind by those who enter. Instead, the heavy-scented powder of the dancing girls, the sweet sickening perfume of great baskets of roses on sale, and the pervading odour of lobster, combine to assail us as we steer through the crowded room to a table. These last are arranged in the familiar hollow square round the wall, leaving a cleared space in the centre for the dancers.

We order supper, and then look about us. It is still a different world from the many we have seen to-day: a world of "wire-pulled automatons," who laugh dead laughter, and sing dead, tuneless songs, in their ghastly clockwork dance of pleasure. There is a sinister host of these puppet-people: girls of seventeen and eighteen, with the hard, settled features of forty; Englishmen, very red and embarrassed, blatantly over for a "larky week-end"; next them a mere baby of fourteen, with sleek curls to her shoulders, and a slazy blue frock to her knees—she belongs to the Polish Jew with the pasty white face, and the three pasty white necks

rolling over his collar. Yonder, a group of Brazilians, most of them very young boys, who have captured the prettiest *danseuse* and carried her off for champagne; beyond them, torpid-eyed Germans seeking schatzkinder, and American drummers by the dozen—their feet on the bar-rail, their hats on the back of their heads, grinning half-sheepishly like nasty little boys on a forbidden holiday.

Well, have you had enough? Does this "typical slice of French life," as the handbooks for tourists label it, amuse you? And what of the dances?—but rather than look at them, let us talk to the girl who is passing. She looks different from the rest, in her dark "tailor-made" and plain white shirt; among the satin and tinsel of the other women, her costume and her white, almost transparent face cry attention to themselves by very modesty. Perhaps she will talk real talk; occasionally—when she finds she has nothing to gain as marionette—one of them will.

We ask her to have some champagne. Nonchalantly she accepts, and sits down. Is she new at the *Royal*? is the leading question. Oh no, she has been coming here for nearly a year. But these messieurs are new (quickly)? I reply with a certain intonation, that we will always be "new" —*i.e.* that we will not come again. She sends me a searching side glance—and understands.

The preliminaries clearly disposed of, we get to the meat of things; baldly and with no apology, now that we have thrown down our hand. What is she doing here? Can't she find a better place? Has she no family to help her?

She smiles, flicks the ash from her cigarette. But yes, she has a family: a blind mother, two little sisters, and a half-witted brother. She is sole bread-winner for the lot. As for this place—a shrug, laconic, unresentful, as she throws a glance round the murky room—it is not *chic*, true it is second-rate, but the commissions are good, and clothes here do not cost much, and—"the simple fact, messieurs," says she, gazing quietly over our shoulder into the glass, "is, that to work any trade successfully, one must have the proper tools. I was young, or I should have thought of that before I began."

You gasp, under your breath. This French girl, when she draws aside the curtain, draws it to reveal with terrible sincerity—a thin, white face. She tells no tale of an attempt to live "honestly," of pitiful struggles as dressmaker, shop-girl, and the rest of the sentimental dodges. She bares her tragedy simply as only a French person can; and it is that she has not the proper tools!

You mumble something meant to be consoling, and shamefacedly slip a louis under her plate. She

accepts it with no trumped-up emotion, but a frank "*Merci!*" And evidently fearing to bore us, moves away with the nonchalance characteristic of her type.

When she is gone, we are suddenly aware of wanting to leave. For among the grinning ghosts, reality has passed; touching with her grim wand the puppets, to show them as naked souls—each with its uncovered reason. So seen, they send a shudder through us: the baby-faced girl in her blue frock, now sleepily batting kohl from her eyes in desperate effort to remain amusing; the dancing-girls with their high, nervous laughter; the set, determined smiles of the better-dressed *cocottes*: it is the artist playing in the meanest of all theatres, the artist born without the "proper tools," or who lost hers, but playing stoically to the end.

And the tziganes are twanging deafening accompaniment on their guitars, and shouting "Patita" at the top of their execrable voices; and smoke and the thick smell of sauces and the scent of the women's *sachets* hangs in sickening haze through the place. Let us go—let us flee from it! For this is not Paris; it is the harlot's house: and that is the loathsome property of the universe.

We rush from it out into the silent street—the air strikes sharp and fresh upon our faces. For it rains, a pearly mist, and the thousand lights make

rainbows on the flat wet flags of paving. We hail a cab, but leave the top open to the grateful dampish cool; and glide away down the perilous hill into what looks like dawn.

But it is only other lights—mist-veiled, and gleaming more intimately now; like the gems of a woman who has gone to her boudoir, but not yet taken off her jewels. The woman calls, softly. Can you keep yourself from answering? You may have your loyalty to faithful London, the Comrade; you may burn your reverential candle before the mystic vestal, Rome; or shout yourself hoarse before the triumph of New York, the star: but can you resist the tugging, glowing, multiple allurement of every-man's One Woman, Paris?

Can you go back over this night when her jewels flashed for you in the Seine, when the rich rumble of her voice called to you across the bridges, when the cool, sweet smell and the throb and cling of her were for you—*you*; and not thrill to her and yearn for her, as men in spite of their inconstancy have thrilled and yearned for and come back to one out of all the rest, throughout the history of women?

I hope that you cannot. For as you return again and again, the "make-up" of the woman fades; the great *artiste* lays aside the cautious mask, steps down from the stage, and for you becomes that greatest of all: a simple human being.

# THE CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE (VIENNA)

## I

### THE PLAYHOUSE

TO see Vienna properly, one should be eighteen, and a young person of good looks and discretion. Patsy was all this, and I, being Patsy's uncle, was allowed my first peep at the jolliest of cities through her *lunettes de rose*. It was a bleak, grey morning in January—with the mercury at several degrees below zero—when we rattled through the quiet streets to our hotel.

"Ugh!" said Patsy, some three minutes after we had left the station, "what a horrid dreary place!"

I suggested deprecatingly that places had a fashion of so appearing, at ten after seven in the morning.

"Yes, but look at those great, gloomy buildings; and you know, Uncle Peter, you always say that what people build betrays what they are."

"Dear me, Patsy, do I say that?" It is alarming to be confronted with one's platitudes before breakfast!

"Yes (emphatically). Well, *I* think that if the Viennese are like their architecture, they must be appallingly dull!" And Patsy wraps her furs and an air of bitter disappointment round her, and subsides into silence.

I am secretly apprehensive. To carry off a young lady of capricious fancy and unquestionable loveliness, from the thick of the balls and parties of her first season, under oath that she shall enjoy even giddier gaiety in the Austrian Carnival; and to behold her gravely displeased with the very bricks and stones of the place—you will admit the situation called for anxiety.

I did what I always do in such a case, and with such a young lady; fed her—as delectable and extensive a breakfast as I could command; and then sent for a young man. To be exact, I had taken this latter precaution two or three days before, being not unacquainted with Patsy's psychology and predilections. The young man arrived,—an officer (it is always best to get an officer when one can) of no mean proportions in his dashing blue uniform and smart helmet. I introduced him to Patsy as the son of my friend Count H——, former Minister to St. James'; Patsy smiled—as Patsy can, and gave him a dainty three fingers. Captain Max clicked his heels together, bowed from his magnificent waist, and kissed Patsy's hand with an impressive: "*Ich*

*habe die Ehre, gnädige Fraülein!"* And we went to watch Guard Change in the Burg.

It is fascinating enough in itself, this old courtyard with its many gates, and weather-beaten walls surrounding the residence of the Hapsburg princes; and when filled with the Emperor's Guards, in their grey and scarlet, and the rousing music of the royal band—to say nothing of that fierce white-whiskered old presence in the window above, surrounded by his brilliant gentlemen—I assure you it can thrill the heart of even an uncle!

Nowhere as in this ancient stronghold, under the gaze of those stern, shaggy-browed old eyes, does the tragic history of Austria so haunt one. Admitting only the figures and episodes of the life of this present Emperor, the imagination is assailed by the memory of Elizabeth—his Empress—and her shameful assassination at Geneva; the ghastly mystery of the death of Crown Prince Rudolf, the one son of the ill-starred royal pair; and the hardships and struggles of Maria Christina (the Emperor's sister) in Spain, and the terrible murder of his brother Maximilian—sent forth in splendour to be Emperor of Mexico, but marked for death from the first. One sees the desolate mad figure of his widow shut within the wild beauty of Castle Miramar, and wonders only how the Emperor himself can have escaped her fate. Bereft of his beautiful wife, the son he idolized, the

brother he himself unknowingly sent to his destruction, Francis Joseph of Austria is at once the most solitary and indomitable personality among the rulers of the world to-day. Never, through all his misfortunes, has his iron pride given way to complaint or regret; and never has he confessed himself beaten.

At the age of eighty-four, he still sits erect in his saddle, and commands with characteristic imperious fire. The people sometimes laugh at his eccentricities, and are impatient of his old-fashioned ideas on certain things, but the tone in which they pronounce his title—*Unser Kaiser*, conveys their acceptance of his divine right as the pivot of their universe. In the recent war of the Balkan Allies, when the progressive Austrian party under Archduke Ferdinand clamoured against the conservative policy of the crown, the great mass of the people stood loyally by the Emperor—and so perhaps were saved the horrors and draining expense of a war of their own.

Austria is always in a ferment of one kind or another, composite as she is of a half-dozen distinct and antagonistic strains of blood that have yet to be really amalgamated; but her Grand Old Man does his best to keep peace between his Slavs and Hungarians, Bohemians and Poles—and generally succeeds. He loves the pomp attached to his imperial pre-

rogative, and is never so happy as when the centre of some elaborate ceremonial in one of his kingdoms. It tickles his vanity always to have extravagant precautions taken for his safety; and on the days when he drives to Schönbrunn (his favourite country residence) two plain-clothes men and two uniformed guards are stationed at every block of the entire way from the Burg to the palace. Punctuality is another of his strong points; he departs or arrives on the dot of the hour appointed, and demands the same exactness of the officials and detectives along the road.

With all his dignity, he is an old person with a temper, and an obstinacy hard to subdue. During one of his recent illnesses he absolutely refused to be shaved; also, what was more important, to eat. The entire palace was in despair, when Mademoiselle Z—— arrived one afternoon on her daily visit. She is a homely lady (formerly a great actress) of almost as many years as the Emperor, and comes every day to play chess with him. When she heard of his dangerous stubbornness on this particular occasion, she marched into the imperial presence with a bowl of soup and some biscuits, and called out: "Come, Franz Joseph, don't be a fool! Sit up and eat."

The Emperor gave her one furious look—and obeyed; afterwards meekly suffering himself to be

shaved and put in proper order as an invalid. He and the doughty old *artiste* have been close friends for forty years, and he is fond of remarking that there is one woman in the world who makes up in brains what she lacks in features. I should like to see the two shrewd old heads over their chess.

Instead, I must remember my responsibilities, and come back to Patsy and her *Hauptmann.* He is bending towards her solicitously, suggesting a walk in the Graben, a cup of chocolate at Demel's, the concert at the Volksgarten after lunch, perhaps in the evening some skating at his club? Patsy finds time to whisper to me that she thinks the Viennese not *too* dull, after all. She hears they even have balls—masked balls, in fancy dress, on the ice. Doesn't Uncle Peter think waltzing on ice sounds rather nice?

Uncle Peter, who has rheumatism, feebly agrees that it does *sound* very nice; and falls into his proper background as chaperone, while the young people dart ahead down the narrow street to the Graben. Here, in the fashionable short promenade, an exhilarating sense of prosperity fills the air. There is the soft elegance of furs, the scent of violets, the occasional gleam of scarlet lining an officer's picturesque white cloak; brilliant shops draw their knots of pretty women to the windows, well-set-up men stroll by in long fur coats or drive

their own superb horses to and fro: all is easy, gay and care-free, betokening an idle happiness.

"And there are no beggars," sighs Patsy contentedly,—"I *am* glad of that!"

It is true—and rather extraordinary for a city of almost two million inhabitants; but on the surface, at least, there seem to be no actually poor people in Vienna. The more one knows the place the more one is impressed with the fact that while the upper classes are extravagant and show-loving, the lower seem to have imbibed a spirit of cheerful thrift which keeps them from real poverty. They have enough to eat and to wear, and for an occasional bit of pleasure; what more, their good-humoured faces seem to ask, could they want?

Only the very wealthy Viennese can afford a house to himself. The great majority of people rent a storey, or half a storey, of the huge residence buildings that give the city its monotonously gloomy look. Row after row of these line the streets, all the same height and the same style; but in no way do they resemble the typical apartment mansions of England, America, or France. Each dwelling in itself is the size of a house of moderate dimensions, with its own inner stairways and separate floors. There are certain conveniences in the arrangement, but I cannot say I find it on the whole satisfactory. One has constantly the feeling of having strayed

into a public building to eat and sleep; which causes one to do both under a depressing sense of apology.

The people unconsciously admit this lack of home attraction, by their incessant attendance at *cafés*. While the Frenchman or the Spaniard spends an hour a day in his favourite *café*, chatting with friends, the Viennese spends an entire morning, afternoon, evening—or all three. Coffee or chocolate with whipped cream (the famous *Wiener Mélange*) is the usual drink with which he pays for his seat, and the illustrated papers that are his obsession. He, or Madame his friend, will remain in a comfortable corner of the window hour after hour, reading and smoking, smoking and reading; only looking up to sip chocolate, or to stare at some new-comer. The *café*, also the constant cigarette-smoking, is as much a habit with the women of Vienna as with the men; and one is not surprised to hear that there are over six hundred of these (literally) "coffee-houses" in the city, and that all of them are continually full.

Some of the larger establishments provide excellent music—and here we are fingering the edges of all Viennese character and culture: next to (or along with) love of gaiety goes a love and understanding of music that amounts almost to a passion. Besides the *café* concerts there are almost daily

military concerts, philharmonic concerts, and symphony concerts; to say nothing of the host of notable recitals crowding one another for attention.

One is struck with the enormous and enthusiastic patronage given to these affairs, each and all. In Anglo-Saxon countries the ventures of a concert manager are at best precarious, and, in spite of the high price of tickets, frequently result in a dead loss. An Anglo-Saxon audience is tepid for both music and drama, being roused to fervour not by either art in itself, but only by a great name made actual upon the stage. In Germany music is a religion; in Vienna, there is added a fire and dash which make it no less pure, while more seductive. From *operette* to *concerto*, the Viennese run the gamut of musical expression, in every phase pre-eminent.

Nor have they an ounce of the artistic snobbishness made fashionable by peoples with whom music is an acquired taste rather than an instinct. They are as frank in enjoyment of *The Merry Widow* as of a Strauss recital with the master conducting; because they regard each as a high art unto itself. There is no aristocracy of music, and so there is no commercialism to degrade it. One may hear grand opera from an excellent seat for two shillings; or the Philharmonic Orchestra, with Weingartner conducting, for the same price. The secret of the whole

system is that to the Viennese good music is not a luxury, but food and drink and essential to life; and therefore to be had by every one.

Concert audiences are attentive to a degree, and during the performance the slightest disturbing sound is sternly hissed. This is true even in the public parks, where the people listen in crowds to the fine military bands that play every day. While at the Volksgarten (frequented by the middle classes and by nobility as well), Patsy was crushed on her first afternoon by the stertorous rebuke of a *Wiener-ische* dowager, because the child removed her gloves during the overture!

"Disagreeable old thing," grumbled Patsy, when it was finished,—"doesn't she know I can't hear with my gloves on?"

Captain Max, in a tumult of perturbation over the episode, solemnly suggested that he convey this unhappy fact to the good lady. But Patsy's naughty mouth was twitching at the corners, and she said she had rather be ordered chocolate. She has a conscience somewhere, has Patsy, in spite of being a pretty woman.

We drank our delicious brew of *Mélange* between Beethoven and Bach, and had another after the Schumann Symphony—being seated like every one else at one of the little tables that fill the Volksgarten. This is under cover in winter, and three times a

week indoor classical concerts are held, under the direction of the leading conductors. Ladies bring their crochet, young girls their gallants; and during the intermissions it is a lively scene, when tables are pushed together, waiters hurry to and fro with creamy chocolate or big frothing *Seidels* of Münchener, and conversation and good cheer hum all round.

Let the orchestra reappear, however, and there is silence — so prompt as to be almost comical. Sentences are left unfinished, chairs are hastily and noiselessly shoved back, and the buzzing crowd of two minutes ago is still as a pin; alert for the first note of music. The tickets for these symphonious feasts cost one and threepence, but the audience could not show more devoted attention (or get finer return) if they had paid a guinea.

Here, as everywhere in Vienna, one is impressed with the good looks and attractiveness of the people in general. In their careful grooming and prevailing air of prosperity they bear a distinct resemblance to Americans; and one may go deeper under the surface, and find a reason for this in the highly complex mixture of race in both nations. There is the same tall, rather aggressive build among the men; the same piquant features, bright hair, and pretty colouring among the women of the two countries. And to go further, there is the supreme fondness for

dress and outward show, that results in reckless extravagance.

With the Viennese, however, this trait is not subjective—*i.e.*, to create a personal impression—but simply part and parcel of the central aim of their existence, to have a good time, and enjoy life to the fullest. They are by no means a people with a purpose, like Americans; they have neither the desire, nor the shrewdness, nor the ambition to make something remarkable of themselves. Rather do they frolic through life like thoughtless children; laughing, crying, falling down and picking themselves up—only to fall again; but always good-natured, kindly, and gay, with a happy-go-lucky cheerfulness that is very appealing as well as contagious whilst one is among them.

There is none of the studied courtesy of the Parisian, nor yet his studied elegance; but a bright spontaneity both in outward effect and natural manner, which shows itself in many captivating little customs of every day. Take, for instance, the pretty fashion of kissing a lady's hand: in France, this is confined to occasions of ceremony, and so creates at once an atmosphere of the formal; in Vienna, it is the ordinary expression of joyous welcome, so that even the shop-keepers, on the entrance of a lady customer, exclaim: "*Küss die Hand, gnädige Frau!*" While to a gentleman, they

declare: "I have the honour to greet you, *Meinherr!*"

Every one is anxious to please, and quick to help the stranger in his struggles with language. As in Bavaria, the German spoken is softened of its original starchiness; so that *Mädchen* becomes *Mädl*, *Bischen Bissell*, etc. Strict Hanoverians scorn such vandalism, but in the mouth of the gentler tongued Southerners it is very pretty. The "low dialect" of the people, that is the typical *Wienerisch*, is an appalling jargon quite incomprehensible to the foreigner. But kindliness, the language spoken by one and all of the warm-hearted Viennese, is everywhere recognized and appreciated.

Patsy assures me that even in their impertinences the young blades of the town are never crass, but show, rather, a lively humour and child-like interest in the lady of their admiration. I well remember that first evening, after the *Hauptmann* had left us, when my niece told me seriously that she was convinced of the grave libel cast on Austrians as a whole, and Austrian officers in particular.

"You know, Uncle Peter," says she, swinging to my arm, as we enter our hotel, "they say they are horrid and dissipated, and will take the first opportunity to say shocking things to a girl. But *I* think they are far too clever for that, besides being too fine. I am sure they know what one is, the minute

they look at one; and behave accordingly. Don't you," adds Patsy anxiously, "think so too, Uncle Peter?"

"Perhaps, perhaps," I return dubiously; "but there's their architecture, you know. You can't get round that. What people build——"

A slim hand is clapped over my mouth. And, "you are to remember, please," says Patsy severely, "we are talking now not of architecture but of officers."

It was true. And, singularly, we have been talking of them a good deal ever since.

## II

### THE PLAYERS WHO NEVER GROW OLD

NOT many days after our establishment in the Carnival City, Patsy had her first experience with the smart "masher" and his unique little game. I being by no means bred to chaperoning, and in all respects, besides, immorally modern, allowed the young lady to go round the corner to a sweet-shop unaccompanied. She came back with a high colour instead of caramels, and—no, there is no way of softening it—she was giggling.

Patsy never giggles unless something scandalous has happened. "What's the matter?" I asked, instantly alarmed.

She tumbled into a chair, laughing helplessly. "The—the funniest thing," she began, gasping.

"A man, I suppose?"

Patsy stopped laughing, and regarded me admiringly. "What an analyst you are, Uncle Peter! Yes, of course, a man; but——"

"Did he follow you—did he speak to you?" I may be modern, but I had one eye on my hat and overcoat.

Patsy giggled again. "No—oh no, Uncle Peter. He didn't follow me, he *went ahead* of me; and when I reached the corner, there he was standing, hat in hand, with the most injured air—as though our appointment was for half-past two and I had kept him waiting quite an hour! His expression was perfectly heavenly—plaintive resignation just giving way to radiant delight—I can't think how he managed it on such short notice. Probably by extensive practice before the glass.

"Anyhow, there was one moment of awful apprehension for him, just as I came up; and then—the most crestfallen disappointment you can imagine. He had arranged everything so considerately and subtly for me, and I, all unconscious of him, passed on! I didn't dare look back, but out of the tail of my eye I could see his chagrin as I disappeared into the side entrance of the hotel. All that art gone for nothing, I suppose he thought; and to be begun over again at the next corner," added Patsy, who is a young woman of rather terrible discernment, at times.

"But it is nice of them not to speak, isn't it?" she said ingenuously. "It shows how really clever they are. No Englishman or Frenchman of the same—er—proclivities would have been as subtle."

Nor as dangerous, thinks Uncle Peter to himself, with a promise to curb his modernity for the future.

It is all very amusing, this manœuvre of the flirtatious Viennese male; and since Patsy's encounter, I have seen it so many times as to know it to be typical; but in its very refinement lies its evil. If the Austrian, even in his vices, were not so free from crudity—so transparently naïve—his attraction would be halved—if not lost entirely. But Patsy was right in her surmise that he can place a woman at a glance; and if he ventures to lead her a bit further than her looks suggest, and than he afterwards finds possible, he is quick to realize his mistake, and if he can to make reparation.

As a student, like his German cousin he lives in frank immorality. There are thousands of students in Vienna—students at the universities, medical students, music students—each with his *Schatzkind*, who often shares his studies as well as his garret. This thoroughly cosmopolitan set of young people plays a distinct part in the free and easy jollity of the city as a whole. You see them in the streets and *cafés*, in the topmost gallery at the opera, and forming enthusiastic groups at all concerts; their shabby velveteens a nice contrast with their vivid, impressionable faces.

During Carnival they are natural leaders in the routs and festivities; this entire season is for them one rollicking fancy-dress ball. They may go hungry, but they can always arrange a new and

clever costume; and one meets them coming home arm-in-arm through the dusk, carrying bulky parcels and humming the waltz from the latest *operette.* They smile at everybody, and everybody smiles back, and unconsciously starts humming too. Patsy says there is something about dusk, and big packages, and soft-falling snow that *makes* one hum. I feared from the first that this was a demoralizing atmosphere for Patsy.

It would have been different if we hadn't known people. But we did know people — a delightful handful, eager to lavish their boundless hospitality on the *wunderschönes Mädl.* And then there was Captain Max, whose marvellous uniforms and crisp black moustache soon became as familiar to our hotel as the bow of the head waiter. Two or three days after our arrival, Captain Max and his mother took Patsy to her first Viennese ball. I stayed at home to nurse my rheumatism, which the freezing temperature and constant snow had not improved. But I was waiting by our sitting-room fire to "hear all about it," when Patsy returned at half-past three, her arms full of roses, her auburn head less strictly coiffed than when she sallied forth.

"Oh, Uncle Peter!" She kissed me at her favourite angle somewhere behind the ear, and sank into a cushion with her chiffons, like a flower into its petals.

"Well, well, did you amuse yourself? The Countess wasn't difficult?"

"She was a duck! (I should no more think of apologizing for Patsy's English than for her *retroussé* nose. Both, as my French friend says, intrigue me infinitely.) She danced harder than any one, and *lieber Himmel*," says Patsy with a gusty sigh, "how they do dance! But I'll begin at the beginning and tell you everything.

"Of course, you know it was this club Captain Max belongs to, and that they dance every month in the ball-rooms of the different hotels. There are only thirty or forty members in the club, so it's nice and small—not one of those herd affairs. Most of the people had arrived before us, and were sitting in the galleries round the ball-room; and before ever the dancing began, Uncle Peter, they all were eating and drinking things. The galleries are raised by just a few steps from the floor of the room itself, and there are lots of tables where continuous supper goes on—really, one is expected to eat *something* between every two dances.

"Fancy, Uncle Peter, one is busily dissecting a quail when one's partner appears; one finishes the waltz, and returns to take another bite, only to be interrupted again, and carried off. It is provoking! But the tables are convenient as an anchor to steer for, and much more fun for the chaperones, I should

think, than those dreary chairs against the wall at home.

"I haven't told you the appalling ordeal of actually arriving at one's table, however. Every girl with her escort must walk the length of the ball-room *alone*, while the lucky ones who are already settled in the gallery pass judgment on one's frock, coiffure, and all the rest. Captain Max hadn't warned me, and when I found myself under that battery of lorgnettes and monocles I was petrified. I knew that my train was a fright, and every pin in my hair about to fall; but somehow I got across that terrible expanse of slippery floor, and to our table.

"The Countess's sister was there—the one who called on Sunday, you know—and her son and daughter, such a pretty girl, Uncle Peter! Black hair and creamy skin—of course, the whole family shows the Hungarian strain—and a delicious frock just to her ankles. It seems all the young girls here wear short dresses for dancing, and so they don't have that draggled look we get with our trains. Every one at the table, including the women, rose during introductions; and, of course, all the men kissed one's hand. Then they brought dozens of other men—Captain Max says there are always three times as many as there are girls at these dances—and I met such a lot that for the rest of the

evening I had no idea whom I knew and whom I didn't.

"We began to dance directly, and oh, my dear, the Vienna waltz. I've seen it on the stage, and it looked easy—just standing in one spot and whirling round; but when one actually attempted it! At first I was so dizzy, I could only hold up my train and keep my feet going. I know now all the sensations of a top when it's spun at full speed and never allowed to die down. But after a while I regained sufficient consciousness to catch the little skip they take on the second step, and then it was easier. There's a sort of swing to it too, that's rather fascinating; and Captain Max does do it well."

Patsy, on her cushion, gazed into the fire—then at the roses in her lap. "Ahem!" I coughed, as an uncle will when the clock points to four of the dawn. "You were saying?"

"Oh—yes! Well, the music, of course, was heavenly; one could have danced to it all night, as most of them do here. The Frau Gräfin said hardly any one goes home before six in the morning, and some at eight! That is why the Viennese laugh at their own custom of paying the porter twenty *Hellers* for opening the door after half-past ten; they all come home in the morning, after the house is unlocked again.

"But I couldn't have kept it up any longer, Uncle Peter. In the first place, you are not allowed to sit out a dance, not even part of one. The minute you drop into a chair out of sheer weariness, some one comes and clicks his heels together, bows profoundly, and off you have to go with him. Then they have a habit of breaking in, that is convenient at times and annoying at others. All the men who have no partners stand in the middle of the room, and when you have had a round or two with one person, another very courteously but firmly stops you and claims his turn. In this way, each dance is divided between four or five men. It's all very well when you don't like your partner of the moment, but——"

Patsy again was looking at her yellow roses. "There are disadvantages?" I suggested.

"Yes. Oh, several kinds of disadvantages, Uncle Peter. Most of my dances were silent as the grave. I would say, 'You speak English?' My partner would reply, 'Alas, fraulein, a few words only. But you, surely you speak German?' 'Unfortunately, not at all.' Then dead silence. But they are all kindness in trying to understand, and every one wants to learn our way of waltzing —'*so langsam*,' they say, wonderingly. When Captain Max and I tried it, so that I might get a little rest, all the others stopped dancing and watched the performance. Then every man I met

wanted me to teach him—they are just like children over something new.

"Poor Uncle Peter, you're yawning. Only let me tell you about the other dances, and then you can go to bed. There were two quadrilles, not the old-fashioned kind, but quite like cotillon figures—really charming. They showed the pretty costumes of the girls and the uniforms of the officers to much better advantage than the round dances do. Then there was a terrible thing called the *Polka Schnell*—faster even than the regular waltz, and that makes one giddy to watch. But the Countess and all the chaperones threw themselves into it as madly as the younger ones, and weren't in the least out of breath at the end. I believe Viennese woman never grow old. They seem to have as good a time at sixty as at sixteen, and to be as popular.

"After the second quadrille we had 'supper'—though we'd been eating, as I told you, all evening. But now we sat down formally to chicken and salad, cakes of all sorts, and cheese and beer. It was a funny supper, wasn't it, Uncle Peter? I suppose they'd sniff at our champagne and ices; they like a substantial meal. The dance immediately after supper is Ladies' Choice, and it's amusing to watch the frantic efforts of each man to engage the favour of his particular divinity. They lean against a pillar and stare into one's eyes with the most

despairing gaze, looking anxiously meanwhile to see if one holds their bouquet. I forgot to tell you the pretty custom they have of bringing one roses and violets all during the evening. The men have great baskets of flowers in their dressing-room, and hurry to and fro with posies for the ladies they admire. By the time you are ready to go home you have quite an imposing collection."

"All of one colour, it seems," I observed innocently, as Patsy herself stifled a yawn, and rose regretfully from her cushioned nest.

"Oh," said Patsy with immoderate indifference, "they're all in my room—the violets and everything. These—" looking down at Captain Max's roses—"I must have forgotten these!" she decides with a brilliant smile. "Good-night, Uncle Peter—you're rather a dear."

That settled it; as any properly trained uncle would have known. When a healthy young woman begins to call her moth-eaten male relatives by endearing names, it is time to lock the stable door—or at least to realize one's temerity in having opened it, in the first place. But as Patsy's mother from her severe infancy has told me, I am most improperly trained; so I hastened to accept an invitation from Countess H——, bidding my niece and me to a skating party at her son's rink next evening.

Every true Viennese has his private rink membership, as he has his other clubs, and is an expert skater. All afternoon and evening the various skating resorts are crowded with devotees of the graceful sport; which is held, by the way, out of doors—the large rinks being simply walled in from the street. Captain Max's is of quite imposing proportions, a very different affair from the cramped, stuffy "ice-palace" of Paris or London. There is a building, to be sure, but this is merely for the *garde-robe* and the inevitable refreshment rooms. The skating takes place on the vast field of ice outside.

At night this is brilliantly illuminated with parti-coloured lights, and the scene during Carnival —when the skaters are frequently in fancy dress— is fascinating beyond description. As I first saw it, gipsies were gliding over the ice with pierrots, geisha girls with pierrettes; Arabs in the ghostly burnous swept past with Indians, painted and feathered, and a whole regiment of Rough Riders swooped down upon them, with bloodthirsty yells. A wonderful polar bear (under his skin a lieutenant of cavalry) lumbered about with his friend an elephant; and devils, ballet-girls (by day perfect gentlemen), *toreros*, and jockeys frisked from one end of the rink to the other—while one of the two seductive Viennese bands was always playing.

Patsy at last saw dancing on the ice, and lost her heart once for all to this marvellous accomplishment. When Captain Max in his subduing red-and-black Mephistopheles costume begged her to try it, she clapped her hands like a child and flew with him to a quieter corner of the rink where he might teach her the difficult gyrations. Before the evening was over, she was waltzing delightedly in the centre, with the best of them. I struggle not to dote, but I must set down here that I have seen few sights as alluring as that young witch in her bright Cossack's jacket and trim skirt, gliding and whirling in the arduous dance; with the maze of other brilliant costumes round her, the fairy lights overhead, and in the air the lilt and thrill of a Viennese waltz.

When we went into the pavilion later for something hot, I noticed with amazement how many of the pierrots had grey hair under their caps, and how many of the geisha girls and pierrettes were addressed as "mother." "But certainly!" said our charming Frau Gräfin with spirit. "Because they have children, are they dead? Because they have gone through much trial in life, are they to mope in a corner and know none of life's joy? Pardon me, honoured *Meinherr*, if I suggest that they are not as old as some of your English young people of twenty!"

I saw that we had fallen on a tender subject

with the delightful lady, who, herself the mother of a boy of twenty-eight, is (as Patsy remarked) quite as lively as any girl of sixteen. And who, if I remember rightly, was rather harshly criticized thereupon at the time of her residence in London. She had certainly a just revenge in her own criticism of the *blasé*, weary English youth of to-day; and the contrast between him and the Viennese of middle-age or even advanced years as other nations number them. Fresh, *vif*, alert with interest for everything, and time for everything as well, the Austrians may be children to the end of their days; but they are wise children, who stay young by design, not by incapacity.

As we have said before, they are so entirely unself-conscious that they never fear making fools of themselves; and in consequence, do not do so. Young and mature, they throw themselves into everything with a whole-hearted abandon that in itself stimulates a like enthusiasm in all about them. They are each other's currents of energy that is never exhausted, but always procreative. And nothing is too much trouble. They will take infinite pains, and go to any amount of expense, to help towards the success of the smallest festivity; while their thought and generosity for others in either joy or trouble, is a revelation to the more stolid Anglo-Saxon.

Among our Viennese friends was a charming bachelor, Herr von G——. He started for Paris one week-end, and had got as far as Munich when he heard from some one that Patsy had tonsillitis. He took the next train back to Vienna, and presented himself at our hotel the same evening. It distressed me very much when I heard why he had come, as the child was really not seriously ill; but Herr von G—— said earnestly, "I do not return to bore you; I am merely on hand if you need me." And he was one of the few men who have seen Patsy, and yet not wanted to marry her. The act was one of simple friendship for us both.

When Patsy had recovered, Herr von G——, instead of going on with his postponed journey, took us up to Semmering for two or three days of winter sports. Here, within an hour's ride of their own city, the Viennese revel in the delights of lugeing, ski-ing, and sleighing—as well as skating, of course; giving themselves to the healthful exercise with characteristic zest and skill. The tiniest children manage their skis with lightning dexterity, and it is beautiful to watch their small swaying bodies skim across the snow like white birds on wing. This kind of flying combines the æsthetic with the practical, and leaves to its natural majesty the clearest of crisp blue skies overhead.

Tobogganing is scarcely less favoured by the

Austrians, who sweep down their dizzy hills with a vim that knows no fear. Horses are waiting at the foot, to drag the toboggans up again; and all day long the laughing groups of men and women, young girls, officers and children, dart down the snowy steeps—ten and twenty strong on each sled—and are hauled back to begin anew. Observing the crowds of Viennese who daily go to and from Semmering, and knowing as one does many of them who would think a week without this excursion shorn of its greatest pleasure, one does not wonder at the happy healthy faces and splendid colour of this sport-loving people.

In the Spring and Fall they play tennis and ride in the Prater—a large park on the outskirts of Vienna; while in the summer every one who can, goes walking in the Tyrol or the German mountains. Women as well as men are expert walkers and mountain-climbers, and their horsemanship is the pride of the nation. It is interesting to note that the Viennese have never paid much attention to golf, and the reason: it is too tame for them. All their sports are swift, dashing, and full of a light individual grace. They are devoted to fencing—to anything that calls into play the quick and skilful move of the individual body; the heavy and brutal is unknown to them. Like children, they boldly attack the feat that lures

the eye; and like children always, achieve therein a *succès fou.*

What is a rheumatic uncle among such people? All he can do is to open doors—which by no amount of gymnastics is he able to shut when he should.

## III

### THE FAIRY-TALE PLAY

BETWEEN officers' cotillons and opera, *thés dansants* and military concerts at the Stadt Park, Patsy sandwiched conscientious layers of sight-seeing. I am not of those who follow Baedeker (even in a shamefaced brown linen cover), but I dutifully accompanied her to the gallery and the royal stables, and to worship before Maria Theresa's emeralds in the Treasury. At the Rathaus I balked —nothing except rice pudding is as depressing to me as a town hall; when it came to the Natural History Museum I was tepid also. And from that time forth, Patsy—with the irrepressible superiority that belongs to born sight-seers and to people who take cold baths—announced that she would take the maid.

I thought this a philanthropic idea, and for several reasons worthy of encouragement. So Patsy and the red-cheeked *Mädl* embarked on a heavy sea of churches, the *Mädl* munching apples under rose-windows, while Patsy inspected the pulpit. A week had been spent in this innocent diversion,

when the dire news came to us that the *Mädl* had been taken to a hospital, with peritonitis. The sour-faced spinster who succeeded her, Patsy would have none of, no matter what the crisis. "I shall go alone to see the engravings," she announced firmly.

I resigned myself to accompany her; but when we reached the Albertina (a shrine of the double star, according to our good friend Karl) I was persuaded to take "a tiny little stroll" into the Graben, and return for Patsy in half an hour. There seemed nothing out of bounds in this, as the library where Archduke Albert housed his engravings, like most libraries, is sternly shunned by all but the semi-defunct and caretakers. It shares the usual old court with the usual old palaces of mediæval Austrian nobility; and I waited at the gate till Patsy had entered the open square, hesitated a moment before the several doors confronting her, and finally followed sedately in the wake of some Americans—past a pompous gold-lace porter, into the first door on the right. The rest of the story is hers.

She walked leisurely up some shallow stairs, without noticing at first that the Americans had stayed behind to converse with the porter; and that finally they went out instead of following her above. She did think the porter was rather elaborate for a

library, said Patsy, but in Austria he didn't seem extraordinary. The staircase was, however; and she wondered why Baedeker had passed it by. Beautifully carved in white marble, it was carpeted with old Turkish rugs and hung with splendid portraits of the Hapsburgs, and — at the landings — with charming old French clocks.

Patsy admired all these things at length, serenely ignoring another and still more imposing guard who scrutinized her sharply as he passed. She has a way with guards, has Patsy; they are generally reduced to becoming humility, no matter how arrogantly they start in. This one stalked on downstairs, leaving her to proceed on her way upward. She was still searching Baedeker for the key to the interesting portraits, and also to the whereabouts of the famous engravings—as yet nowhere to be seen.

According to the guide-book, these should be "in two long rows above the book-cases"; and "one should sit down at the small tables provided for inspecting them, as the crowd of tourists makes it difficult to see the drawings satisfactorily." This was puzzling. Patsy, now in solitary possession of the large room at the head of the stairs, saw neither engravings nor tables nor tourists. She was quite alone in the centre of the beautiful empty apartment.

She looked at the Louis Quinze furniture; at the gorgeous onyx table set with miniatures; at the

impressive portrait of Maria-Theresa over the mantelpiece, and several autographed pictures of kings. Baedeker said nothing of all this. It occurred to Patsy then that it must be the reception room of the late Archduke, and that the engravings were probably on the floor above. But before going on, she paused in one of the gold and grey chairs for a moment, further to admire the exquisite room.

While she sat there, she was startled by the sudden appearance of two footmen, in the same grey and gold livery of the porter downstairs. They showed no signs of surprise at her presence, however, but mumbled obsequious greetings and backed into the room beyond. Hardly had they disappeared when another instalment of flunkies came in, carrying great trays of food; they too, at sight of Patsy, bent as low as they could under the circumstances—but she now was thrown into a tumult of trepidation. When the door into the other room was opened again, she had a glimpse of a great round table laid with gold plate and crystal and Sèvres; grand high-backed chairs surrounded it, and more Hapsburg portraits lined the walls.

Patsy gasped with terror and astonishment. At last it dawned on her that she was in the wrong place!

She caught up her furs and the miserable guide-book and started towards the door. Only to suffer

still worse fright, when she was confronted there by a tall man in uniform, who in most courteous French insisted on her staying to lunch. He was young and had black hair and blue eyes (I will not vouch for the authenticity of these details, as Patsy just then saw all uniforms possessed of black hair and blue eyes); and it was hard to be stiff with him. But she managed to explain with some dignity that she had come to the Albertina to see the engravings, but had evidently entered the wrong door; that she deeply regretted the intrusion, which she begged this gentleman to excuse, and that she must forthwith find her uncle who was waiting in the court below.

I wasn't, but that is beside the story. The blue eyes of the young man being as keen as most Austrians', at a second glance he realized his own mistake, and apologized in turn; hastening to add that mademoiselle could not intrude in this house, as it was honoured by her presence, and that she and her esteemed uncle would be welcome whenever they might be gracious enough to visit it. He begged leave to accompany her downstairs, and as Patsy could hardly refuse, she went with him—"knees wobbling, and my heart still in my mouth, Uncle Peter! When the glum old porter saw us, he all but went into catalepsy; and bowed to the ground, while the nice uniformed man was talking fast to him in German.

"Then he—the nice man—kissed my hand, and held the door for me himself, and said all the polite things over again. I was feeling relieved by this time, so I thought I might smile when I said *Au revoir*, and begged pardon once more for my stupidity. I stole a last look too at that lovely staircase and the fierce old portraits; and now Uncle Peter, I want to get Captain Max and find out directly whose they are."

Captain Max was inclined to be what Patsy calls "starchy" over the affair. "Grey uniform—blue eyes—black hair?" he repeated tersely. "And the door was the first on the right, in the Albertina Palace?"

Patsy nodded. Suspense overpowered her speech.

"Then it was Salvator, brother of Archduke Ferdinand, the heir to the throne. He was probably having one of his famous little luncheons in the Archduke's palace." And Captain Max scowled darkly, first at Patsy, then at me. He thinks, poor enamoured young man, I should have a guardian myself.

"Then I was in the Archduke Ferdinand's palace?" cried Patsy. "But why was I allowed? Where were all the guards and things? I might have had a bomb in my muff!"

"We don't have suffragettes in Austria," said Captain Max loftily. "And the heir is what you

say 'strong' for democracy. He has fewer servants than anybody. Those that he has were probably getting Salvator's luncheon ready."

A look I well know came into Patsy's limpid eyes. "It looked like a very nice luncheon," said she; "I wish now that I'd stayed."

The *Hauptmann* coloured furiously. Then all at once he laughed. "You will have a chance to tell him so," he said blandly, "when you make your curtsey to him at the ball next week!"

Really, he is not so bad, this young man for whom I opened the door.

The ball was the famous *Metternich Redoute*, given every year during Carnival, by the old Countess who was Austrian ambassadress at the court of the third Napoleon. Each year she names her *masque* by a different fantasy, and once it is announced, excitement runs high over costumes, headdress, etc. This winter it was *Meeresgrund*, "The Bottom-of-the-Sea Ball," and the shops along the Graben and Kärtnerstrasse displayed seductive ropes of coral, glittering fish-skins, pearls and golden seaweed—all the heart of mermaid could desire. The one topic of conversation at parties, between acts at the opera, and in the boudoir at home, closeted with anxious maids, was—What shall her costume be for the *Meeresgrund*?

It must be something original, something *chic*

(that word that is almost more Viennese than French), something beautiful and costly—for does not Royalty open the ball? Patsy's Titian head all but turned grey during the racking period of indecision. When finally with impressive secrecy she and the recovered *mädl* had spirited her disguise behind locked doors, there was still a tantalizing week before the great event. I did what I could to assuage impatience, in the way of opera tickets, concerts, and a performance of Duse.

Over the actress, Patsy went as mad as any Viennese; and even I cried a mild *bravo* or two. Curious, how the sight of a charming woman playing a captivating part, like *La Locandiera*, has the effect of opening one's mouth, and making one emit strange sounds! The same thing happened to me at the Sunday-morning concert of the *Männer-gesangverein*—it looks like a Sanskrit idiom, but it is a simple society of Viennese business-men, clubbed together to sing on an occasional Sabbath morning. They make no pretence at high art, but are fated (by birth and every instinct) to achieve it; and when they stand up two hundred strong, and roll out the majestic phrases of Beethoven's *Hymn of Praise*, well it is time for even a moth-eaten mere relative to make a fool of himself.

I behaved better at opera. If there is any behaviour in one, opera will bring it out. In

Vienna, I mean, of course; not in New York, or Paris, or Covent Garden, where manners and clothes to be *au fait* must be *au minimum*—and where the real performance is mannequin parade, by the great jewellers and dressmakers. In Vienna, opera-goers have the unique custom of going to hear opera. They arrive on time; or if they do not, they wait outside in the corridor till the end of the first act. The curious conclusion is drawn by the audience in general, that it is present to hear and see what is going on upon the stage; any interruption to this, whether of whispering or rattled programmes, is rudely hissed; while one who attempts to leave or to approach his seat after the first note of the overture has been sounded, finds himself detained with greater force than fondness. The rare premise is entertained that opera is designed to furnish music, and that the music is worth hearing. It does not seem to occur to any one to dispute this by leaving before the final note is struck, and the final curtain falls. To the New Yorker especially, thirsting for his champagne and lobster, this must be a diverting system.

But the New Yorker has probably disdained Vienna opera altogether, as too cheap to be worth anything. The best seats in the house are only three dollars (twelve shillings), while excellent stalls may be had for half that price, and the students and

enthusiasts up in the gallery pay a sixth of it. Officers come off better still: in the circular pit reserved for them, though they have to stand, these servants of the Emperor pay the Imperial Opera only eighty *Hellers* (eightpence). Of course there is a goodly show of uniforms all over the house as well; and with the pretty toilettes of the women, the audience is a gay and attractive one. Though the horse-shoe is only about half the size of the New York Metropolitan Opera, there is a comfortable intimacy in its rich gold and scarlet loges; besides (the one elegance the Metropolitan lacks) the quartered trappings of the royal box.

This last is often occupied by one or another of the archdukes and their wives, and several times a year the Emperor himself is present. Then it is gala performance, and all ladies who attend must be in light evening frocks; gentlemen of course in the regulation claw-hammer. It is somewhat disconcerting to see this fashionable assembly extract from its coat-pockets a generous ham sandwich, and begin to eat it before the curtain goes up; also to watch the rows of elegant ladies and gentlemen waiting their turn in line at the refreshment bar between acts, and to behold the enthusiasm with which they devour large cheese cakes and beer. The fact is that opera in Vienna begins so early (seven o'clock as a rule), few people have a chance to dine before

they leave home; and they are far too sensible to sit hungry through a long performance, or to satisfy their appetite surreptitiously, as Anglo-Saxons would. They want food, and they go and get it—frankly as they desire. I have seen our charming Frau Gräfin dispose of as many as nine ham sandwiches in the course of an evening; calmly whisking the crumbs from her white satin gown meanwhile.

It is superfluous to speak of the all-satisfying delight of the music itself at the Imperial Opera. No one who has seen Weingartner conduct needs to have it described. For no one who has not seen him, can it be described. Sufficient to say that the merits of the piece are not left in the hands of a quartet of fabulously-paid principals, or to the luxurious detail of extravagant mounting; but that every voice in the chorus, every inconspicuous instrument of the orchestra, is planned, and trained, and worked into an *ensemble* as perfect as a master-ear can make it. And the *bravos* that resound at the end of each act are the sure token of the master's success; for nowhere is there a more critical, or a more appreciative, opera audience than in Vienna.

This is true of the *Volksopera* as well as of the Imperial. Though at the "People's Opera" the lighter pieces are given for half the price charged at the more pretentious house, the lower middle class

who attend them are no less musically trained and difficult to satisfy.

But while every class demands and is given high excellence in classical music, it is in the *operette* that they unconsciously recognize and worship the true soul of Vienna. As far removed from English musical comedy as caviar from candy, this sparkling, rippling, dashing whirl of airs and waltzes seems to catch up the familiar types out of the streets and *cafés*, ball-rooms and boudoirs, and present them there on the stage *en masse*. In place of the musical-comedy milkmaid, with her Louis heels and pink satin *décolleté*, we have the well-known students and *grisettes*, *grandes dames* and varnished old *noceurs* seen in the Graben every day. They wear real clothes, and say real things, and make real mistakes—all to the most entrancing music Franz Lehar or Leo Fall can contrive; and the result is a madness of delight on the part of the audience, such as comes only when people are shown *themselves*.

Shocking? Yes, frequently. Viennese and their *operettes* that reflect them are apt to shock many a conventional-minded foreigner. They even shock themselves sometimes—but excuse the episode a minute later. For they are quick to forgive, and are not over-particular as to morals, if the person eschewing them be gay, attractive, and clever.

Hence the heroes and heroines of their *operettes* are audacious to a degree somewhat startling to the uninitiated in Viennese life.

But they make up for it in *verve* and brilliancy. See them dash through three acts of wit and lightning movement,—with all their liveliness they never romp; hear them sing their complicated, racing songs, without a fault; watch them whirl and glide in the heady waltz—laughing, dancing, singing all at once, and perfectly. Shocking? you cry, pounding your cane to bits in time with the tune: Piffle!

It does not do to say this to Patsy. But Patsy, happily, understands very little German; so that I was able to indulge my vice for *operettes* with her, uncurbed. Patsy's thoughts were all on the *Meeresgrund.* As we intended to leave Vienna the day after that, it may without fantasy be supposed that some of her less well-behaved thoughts left the bottom of the sea for a certain skating-rink, where she had learned the guiding value of blue eyes and black hair. But outwardly everything was concentrated on the *Redoute.*

I am not a spiteful person, but I was inclined to gloat when the momentous night arrived, and Patsy in her shimmering costume confronted our good Countess. English youth settled its score, I think. For the good lady—herself marvellous in lobster-

pink and a white wig—flew to Patsy, kissed her on both cheeks, and cried: "*Aber!* It is of an enchantment, a loveliness of fairies, — *wunderbar!*"

And if I do say it who had no part in the creation, she was right. Patsy stood before us as a fisher-girl, her filmy golden nets caught over her shoulders and round the waist with glistening crabs and little brilliant lizards. In contrast with the other women present and their elaborate head-gear, the witch had let down her rippling auburn curls to fall in simple glory to her waist. Her cheeks were softly flushed, and her big yellow-brown eyes were shining, as she asked demurely, "Do you like me, Uncle Peter?"

I was not too dazzled to forget it was not I actually being asked. But as Captain Max maintained absolute silence (that most ominous of answers!) I replied with nice restraint that I found her charming. And we entered the ball-room.

It was a vast hall surrounded by shallow galleries, and at the far end a platform arranged in the style of a royal drawing-room. In the ball-room itself, great ropes of sea-weed and ruddy coral hung pendent down the blue-green walls; mammoth shells, of palest pink, held the mermaids' chaperones; a fairy ship twinkled, one entire side of the hall, with favours and fancies awaiting the dance of the sirens;

while at every nook and corner lustrous crinkled pearls gleamed forth light.

The glassy floor-pool in the midst of all this fantasy was crowded with nereids, water-sprites, lovely white chiffon gulls, and Loreleis with their combs of gold. But they were very modern Loreleis, who kept their hair up in correct ondulation, and whose fascinations proved less irresistible than those of one little red-locked fisher-girl. Like everybody else, she was masked, and flitted about the giant circle of the promenade with a tall Captain of the Guards in brilliant full-dress uniform. The *Metternich Redoute* is the one event of Carnival at which only the women appear in fancy dress. The officers and civilians, in soberer garb, form a phalanx in the centre of the room, whence they watch the gorgeous procession of *promeneuses*. For until the Court arrives, every one walks about and admires every one else; while one of the two royal bands plays constantly. Laughing masked ladies, unknown to one another, exchange gay greetings; compliments are bestowed and received in German, French, English, Spanish, Italian, and Hungarian; while the familiar "du" is the rule of the evening.

All at once something electric passes over the chattering assembly. From a splendid shifting mass it divides into two solid lines, leaving a broad open space down the centre. The sprightly old

hostess is in her place, the bands burst into the stirring chords of the national hymn—and the Court enters!

First the old Emperor with his two gentlemen of the household: erect, fiercely handsome in his blue-grey uniform of the Hapsburgs, glittering with orders. The young lieutenants who have spent the afternoon ridiculing his war policy, at sight of the well-known grizzled head, lose their own and salute with enthusiasm. The old man, haughtily unconscious, passes on; next comes the young heir-apparent, with Archduchess Maria-Annunziata (the Emperor's niece, and first lady of the land), who wears Maria-Theresa's emeralds, and a magnificent tiara overshadowing those of the ladies who follow her. But each of them too is ablaze with jewels, while for sheer beauty and distinction a more remarkable retinue of women could not be found.

There is the ruddy fairness of the German, the wild grace of the Slav, the rich olive and great dark eyes of the Hungarian, the chestnut hair and black brows of Lombardy: every type as it passes is sworn the loveliest—and then forsworn when the next comes by. The Court ladies have confined their fantasy to the coiffure, and some of these head-dresses are marvels of ingenuity and elegance. Wigs are much favoured; white and high, and crowned with ships of jewels, or monster pearls, or

nets of diamonds interwoven with every sort of precious stone. The archdukes and high officers in their mere uniforms, for once are insignificant in the trail of this effulgence of their women; and Patsy did not even see her Prince Salvator till all of them were seated on the platform, and the ball was formally begun.

Twelve young girls and men of the nobility open the dance with a quadrille, prescribed according to Court etiquette, and marked by a quaint stateliness. The girls are dressed alike in simple frocks of white and silver, while the young men are in more or less elaborate uniform. After the quadrille, dancing is general; but the crowd is too great for it to be any pleasure at first. Not till after the Court has gone is there really room to move about. Meanwhile, favoured personages are led to the Master of Ceremonies, and by him presented to Royalty on its dais.

Thanks to Countess H——, Patsy and I were permitted to pay homage; and even the severe old Emperor himself unbent, to smile at the witch in her shimmering frock when she made her *révérence*. There was a look about Patsy that night that a stone image must have melted to—a radiance at once so soft and so bright, no man could have resisted—or woman failed to understand. I can see her now, the colour deepening in her cheek as she

made her curtsey to Archduke Salvator. Captain Max was just behind her; the Countess and I at one side.

The Archduke (who did have blue eyes and black hair) was about to return Patsy's salutation with his bow of ceremony, when suddenly he looked into her face. His own for a moment was a study. Then gazing over her shoulder at Captain Max in his glowering magnificence, he inquired gravely: "And this, then, is the uncle?"

The rose swept Patsy's cheek to her slender neck. For an instant she hesitated, then, looking straight at me instead of at the Archduke, she said sturdily: "This is the uncle's nephew-to-be, and your Highness is the first to learn of it!"

Of course, the Countess turned faint, and all but forgot Court etiquette in a frenzied hunt for her salts; and the Archduke kissed Patsy's hand, and shook Max's, and amidst a host of incoherent congratulations discovered that he and Max belonged to the same regiment; and somehow we bowed ourselves out of the Presences and into the gallery again.

The Countess embraced Patsy, within shelter of a blue grotto, and would have carried her off for a good cry; but Patsy turned to me. "Uncle Peter," she swung to my arm with that destructive wheedlesomeness of hers,—"Uncle Peter, you *are* pleased?"

Max too approached me with an anxiety that would have flattered a Pharaoh. "Patsy," said I, admirably concealing my overwhelming surprise, "I have only one thing to say: *you* shall be the one to tell your mother!"

Of course she wasn't. I knew from the first that she wouldn't be, and meekly endured the consequences. But all that is sequel. For the rest of the *Redoute* I sat with the Countess in the jaws of a *papier-mâché* crocodile, and ate macaroons and discussed family pedigree; and Patsy and my nephew-elect fed off glances, and waltzed till five in the morning. It was the most hectic evening of my two-score years and ten.

When at last we left the bottom of the sea, gaiety was at its crest. The Court had departed long since; but nymphs and nereids whirled more madly than ever, Loreleis spun their lures with deeper cunning than before—now they were unmasked; and mere men were being drawn for ever farther and farther into the giddy, gorgeous opalescence of the maze. In retrospect, they seemed caught, and clung to by the twining ropes of coral; mermaids and men alike enmeshed within the shining sea-weed and pale, rosy shells—compassed, held about by the blue-green walls of their translucent prison. The pearly lights gleamed softer, the music of the sirens floated sweeter and more seductive on each wave, the water-sprites

and cloudy gulls circled and swam in wilder, lovelier haze.

And then—the wand of realism swept over them. They were a laughing, twirling crowd of Viennese, abandoned to the intoxication of their deity: the dance. Reckless, pleasure-mad, never flagging in pursuit of the evanescent *joie de vivre*, they became all at once a band of extravagant, lovable children who had stayed up too late and ought to have been put to bed.

But I was always a doting uncle. I left them to their revel, and departed. I shall go back some day, for I have now in Vienna the gay, the *gemütlich*, a niece named Patsy—and it all came from choosing a train that arrived before breakfast!

THE SOUL OF OLD SPAIN.

# THE BROKEN-DOWN ACTOR (MADRID)

## I

### HIS STAGE OF ANOTHER DAY

IN spirit as in distance, it is a far cry from the child-like gaiety and extravagance of Vienna to the gloom and haughty poverty of Madrid. Gloomy in its psychic rather than its physical aspects is this city of the plain; for while the sun scorches in summer, and the wind chills in winter, thanks to the quite modern architecture of new Madrid there is ample light and space all the year round.

Any Spanish history will tell you that Charles v. chose this place for his capital because the climate was good for his gout. One author maintains that it was for the far subtler reason that Madrid was neutral ground, between the jealous cities of Toledo, Valladolid, and Seville. But every one, past and present, agrees that the Spanish capital is the least Spanish of any town in the kingdom. It shares but one distinctive trait with the rest of Spain—and that the dominant trait of the nation: pride, illimitable

and unconditioned, in the glory of the past; oblivion to the ruin of the present.

Like a great artist whose star has set, Spain sits aloof from the modern powers she despises; wrapped in her enshrouding cloak of self-sufficiency, she dreams or prattles garrulously of the days when she ruled without peer—not heeding, not even knowing, that the stage to-day is changed beyond her recognition.

The attitude is, however, far more interesting than the bustle and mere business efficiency of the typical modern capital. After the vastness and confusion of Waterloo and St. Lazare, one arrives in Madrid at a little station suggestive of a sleepy provincial town. Porters are few and far between, and one generally carries one's own bags to the primitive horse cabs waiting outside. Taxis are almost unheard of, and the few that are seen demand prices as fabulous as those of New York. Every *Madrileño* who can possibly afford it has a carriage; but the rank and file use the funny little trams—which I must say, however, are excellently conducted and most convenient.

Both the trams and all streets and avenues are plainly marked, with large clear signs; and the pleasant compactness of the city makes it easy to find one's way about. The centre of life and activity is the Puerta del Sol (Gate of the Sun), an oval plaza which the Spaniards fondly describe as "the busiest

square in the world." There is no doubt at all that it is the noisiest; with its clanging trams, rattling carriages, shouting street venders, and ambulant musicians.

These latter, with the beggars, form to my mind the greatest plague of Madrid; their number is legion, their instruments strangely and horribly devised, and they have the immoral generosity to play on, just the same, whether you give them money or not. Though, as a matter of fact, when you walk in the Puerta del Sol, they are for ever under your feet, shaking their tin cups for *centimos*, and whining for attention.

I infinitely prefer the gentle-voiced old men who offer soft balls of puppies for sale; and when they are refused, tenderly return the cherished scrap to their warm pockets. The swarm of impish newsboys are hard to snub, too: Murillo has ingratiated them with one for ever—their rags and their angelic brown eyes in rogues' faces.

But I find no difficulty at all in refusing the beggars. These are of every age, costume, and infirmity; and enjoy full privilege of attacking citizen or stranger, without intervention of any kind by the police. A Spanish lady naïvely explained to me that they had indeed tried to deal with the beggars; that the government had once deported them one and all to the places where they were born (for, *of*

*course*, none of them came originally from Madrid!). But would I believe it, within a week they were all back again? Perhaps I, as a foreigner, could not understand how the poor creatures simply loved Madrid too passionately to remain away.

I assured the señora gravely I could understand. In fact, it seems to me entirely normal to be passionately attached to a place that yields one a tidy income for nothing. No, rather for the extensive development and use of one's persuasive powers. Imagination too, and diplomacy, must be employed; and sometimes the nice art of "coming down." The monologue runs like this:

"Good-afternoon, gentleman. The gentleman is surely the most handsome, the most kind-hearted, the best-dressed, and most polite of all the world. If the gentleman could part with a peseta to a brother in deepest woe, God would reward him. God would give him still more elegant health, and more ravishing children. If he has no children, God would certainly send him some—for only half a peseta, oh gracious gentleman. To a brother whose afflictions could not be recited from now till the end of the world, so multiple, so heartrending are they. I am an old man of seventy, oh most beautiful gentleman—old as the gentleman's illustrious father, may Mary and the angels grant him long life! Only twenty centimos, my gentleman—God will give you

a million. Ten centimos—five! . . . *Caramba!* a curse on your hideous face, and loping gait. There is no uglier toad this side of hell!"

One thing beggars *can* choose, with proficiency: their language. In Madrid they would be less disgusting were it not for their loathsome diseases and deformities. The government is far too poor to isolate them in asylums, so they continue to possess the streets, and the already overcrowded Gate of the Sun.

From this plaza the principal thoroughfares of the city branch off in a sort of wheel; and mules, goats, and donkeys laden with every imaginable sort of burden pass to and fro at all hours of day and night. Shops there are, of course, of various kinds, and lotteries, and *cafés*, crowded round the square; but the waiters carry the trays on their heads, and the whole atmosphere is that of a mediæval interior town rather than a modern cosmopolitan city.

To be sure, in Alcalà, the principal street off the Puerta del Sol, there are clubs and up-to-date restaurants; but only men are supposed to go to the restaurants; and in the clubs they look ill at ease and incongruous. The life of the Spaniard is inalienably the life in the streets; where you will find him at all hours, strolling along in his clothes of fantastic cut and colour, or sitting at a *café* drinking *horchatas*—the favourite beverage, made from a

little nut. His constant expression is a steady stare; varying from the dreamily absent-minded to the crudely vulgar and licentious.

The widely diversified ancestry of the Spanish people is keenly interesting to follow out in the features of the men and women of to-day; among no race is there greater variety of type, though it is four hundred years since the Moors and Jews were driven out, and new blood has been practically excluded from Spain. Yet one sees the Moorish and Jewish casts as distinct to-day as ever they were; to say nothing of the aquiline Roman, or the ruddy Gothic types from the far more ancient period.

In names, too, history is eloquent: we find Edwigis, Gertrudis, and Clothilde of the Gothic days; Zenaida and Agueda of the Moorish; Raquel, Ester, of the Jewish. I think that in no language is there such variety or beauty in woman's names. Take, for example, Consuelo, Amparo (Aid), Luz—pronounced Luth, and meaning light; or Felicitas, Rosario, Pilar, Soledad, and a wealth of others as liquid and as significant.

It is hard to attach them to the rather mediocre women one sees in the streets or on their way to mass: dressed in cheap tailored frocks, a flimsy width of black net over their heads. The mantilla is no longer current in Madrid, except for *fiestas* and as the caprice of the wealthy; but this shoddy

offspring of the mantilla—the inferior black veil—is everywhere seen on all classes of women. The *Madrileña* who wears a hat announces herself rich beyond recounting, and is charged accordingly in the shops. Needless to say, there is no such thing as a fixed price in any but the places of foreign origin.

I have often wondered whether Spanish women are stupid because they are kept in such seclusion, or whether they are secluded because they are stupid. It is hard to separate the cause from the effect. But certainly the Spanish beauty of song and story is rarer than rubies, to-day; while the animation that gives charm even to an ugly French or American woman is utterly lacking in the *Española's* heavy, rather sensual features. I am inclined to think, from the fact that it is saliently a man's country, she is as he has made her, or allowed her to become. And when you remember that her highest enjoyment is to drive through the rough-paved streets, hour after hour, that she may see and be seen; when you consider that the rest of her day is spent in a cheerless house without a book or a magazine, or any occupation but the menial household drudgery, you pity rather than condemn the profound ignorance of the average Spanish woman.

Married at sixteen, the mother of six or seven children by the time she is twenty-five, she grows old before her time even as a Latin woman. While

by men she is disregarded and treated with a rudeness and lack of respect revolting to the Anglo-Saxon. Her husband precedes her into and out of the room, leaves her the less comfortable seat, blows smoke in her face, and expectorates in her presence; all as a matter of course, which she accepts in the same spirit. Her *raison d'être* is as a female; nothing more. What wonder that the brain she has is expended in gossip and intrigue, and that her husband openly admits he cannot trust her out of his sight?

Like the Eastern women she resembles, she is superstitiously devout; as indeed the men are too, when they remember to be. All the morning, week-days as well as Sunday, the churches are full, as one mass succeeds another. It is a favourite habit of the younger men to wait outside the fashionable churches until the girls and their duennas come out; and then to remark quite audibly on the charms of the former. The compliments are of the most bare-faced variety, but are affably received, even sometimes returned by a discreet retort *sotto voce*. The blades call the custom "throwing flowers," and the bolder of the maidens are apt to fling back over their shoulder, "Thanks for the flower!"

One can always see this little comedy outside the well-known church of San Isidro (patron saint of Madrid), which, with the more important clubs and

public buildings, is in the Street of the Alcalà. The Alcalà connects the Puerta del Sol with the famous promenades of the Prado and the Castellana, which are joined together by an imposing plaza with a fountain, and extend as far as the park of the Retiro.

Spaniards are firmly convinced that the Castellana is finer than the Champs Élysées; but it is, in reality, a rather stupid avenue—broad, and with plenty of trees in pots of water, yet quite flat, and lacking the quaint *guignols* and smart restaurants that give colour to the French promenade. Galician nursemaids, with their enormous ear-rings, congregate round the ice-cream booths; while their over-dressed charges play "bull-fight" or "circus" in the *allées* near by.

But the Castellana is an empty stretch of sand, for the most part, until half-past six in the evening, when it becomes for an hour or two the liveliest quarter of the city. The mansions on either side of the street open their gates, carriages roll forth, *señoras* in costumes of French cut, but startling hue, are bowled into the central drive-way, *señors* in equally impressive garments appear on horseback; and the *paseo*—the event of the day—has begun.

Strangers who have not been asked to dine with their Spanish friends, because the latter cannot afford a cook, will be repeatedly taken to drive in a

luxurious equipage with two men on the box, and a pair of high-stepping bays. For a Spanish family will scrimp and save, and sometimes actually half starve, in order to maintain its place in the daily procession on the Castellana. This is true of all classes, from the impoverished aristocracy to the struggling bourgeoisie; and is so much a racial characteristic that the same holds in Manila, Havanna, and many of the South American cities. What his house is to the Englishman, his trip to Europe to the American, his carriage is to the Spaniard. With this hall-mark of social solvency, he can hold up his head with the proudest; without it, he is an outcast.

The *Madrileños* tell among themselves of certain ladies who afford the essential victoria by dressing fashionably from the waist up only. A carriage-rug covers the other and well-worn part of their apparel. This is consistent with stories of economy carried into the smallest item of the household expenses—such as cooking without salt or pepper, and foregoing a tablecloth, in order that the family name may appear among the box-holders at the opera. Spanish people look upon these sacrifices, when they know of them, as altogether admirable; from peasant to grandee, they are for ever aiding and abetting each other at that most pitiful of all games: keeping up appearances. But however petty the apparent

motive, there is a certain tragic courage behind it; the desperate, final courage of the *grand artiste*, refusing to admit that his day is dead. And under all his burdens, all his bitter poverty, silent, uncomplaining.

Seen in this light, that stately queue of carriages on the Castellana takes on something more than its mere superficial significance—which is to show oneself, and further to show one's daughters. Officers and civilians parade up and down, on either side of the drive-way, or canter along near the carriages, with one object: to stare at the young girls. Far from being snubbed, their interest is welcomed with complaisance; and many a marriage is arranged from one of these encounters on the Castellana.

The young man notices the same girl for two or three days, then asks to be presented to her; the heads of the two families confer, finances are frankly discussed, and if everything is found satisfactory the courtship is allowed to proceed. Parents are generally easy to satisfy, too, being in frantic haste to marry off their daughters. The old maid and the bachelor girl are unknown quantities in Spain; and an officer with a salary of five pounds a month is eagerly snapped up as an excellent catch.

This gives some idea of the absolute pittance whole families are used to live on, and to consider ample. The bare necessities of life are gratefully

counted by Spaniards as luxuries; while luxuries, in the modern sense of the word, are practically unheard of. Private motor-cars, for example, are so rare as to be noticed when they pass through the streets; while, on the other hand, a sleek pair of mules is considered almost as emphatic a sign of prosperity as a pair of horses. It is an everyday sight to see the gold cockades of royalty, or the silver of nobility, on the box behind two mules. And a Spaniard realizes nothing curious about this. If it is a habit of his countrymen, it is right and proper and elegant, and to be emulated by all who can afford it.

If you tell him, moreover, of the conveniences of other countries (not in comparison with his own, but quite casually), he looks at you with an indulgent smile, and believes not a word of it. He himself is far too poor to travel, so that naturally he is sceptical of what he calls "traveller's tales." I once showed a Marqués whom I was entertaining, a picture of the Metropolitan Tower in New York. He laughed like an amused child. "Those Americans! They are always boasting," he said; "but one must confess they are clever to construct a photograph like that." Nor was I able to convince him, during the remainder of the evening, that such a building, and many others as tall, actually did exist.

The old actor sits with his eyes glued to his own pictures, mesmerizing himself into the belief that they are now as ever they were: representative of the greatest star of all the Stage. He cares not to study the methods of the new generation, for he loftily ignores its existence. Tradition is the poison that infests his bones, and is surely eating them away.

He has a son who would save him, if the dotard would permit; a tall young man, with a splendid carriage, and an ugly, magnetic face—alert to every detail of modern régime. But the young man is a king, and kings, as every one knows, have the least power of anybody. Alfonso XIII., with all his indefatigable energy, can leaven but a very small lump of the blind self-sufficiency of Spain. He plays a hopeless part bravely, and is harder working than most of his peasants.

His palace stands at the end of old Madrid, on the high land above the river, where the Moorish Alcazer once stood, a magnificent situation. The façade fronts and dominates the city; the rear looks out on the river Mazanares and beyond, on the royal park of the Casa del Campo. Here one can often see the King shooting pigeons in the afternoon, or taking tea with the Queen and the Queen-mother. The people are not permitted in this park, but foreigners may apply for a card of

admission, and go there at any time, provided their coachman is in livery.

One Sunday I saw the royal children, with their nurses, building a bonfire in a corner of the park. They were shouting and running about most lustily, and it was a relief to see royalty (though at the age of three and four) having a good time. The little Prince of the Asturias was in uniform, Prince Jaimé in sailor's togs, and the two small Infantas in white frocks with blue sashes. They all looked simply and comfortably dressed, and a credit to the good sense of their father and mother. The nurses, who are Englishwomen—pink-cheeked and cheerful—wore plain blue cotton frocks and shady straw hats. It was a satisfying picture, among the elaborateness and false show that surrounds the average Spanish child.

Of all the royal children, Jaimé is the beloved of the people. He has a singularly sweet, and at the same time animated, face; and, the Spaniards proudly declare, is the true Spanish type. Doubtless, too, his sad infirmity (he was born a deaf-mute), and his patience and cleverness in coping with it, has endeared this little prince to everybody.

The reigning Spanish family are the last of the powerful Bourbons, and their court is conducted with all the Bourbon etiquette of Louis XIV. It is a less brilliant Court than the Austrian, being very

[*Franzen.*

THE QUEEN OF SPAIN AND THE PRINCE OF THE ASTURIAS.

much poorer; but the shining white grandeur of the palace itself makes up for elegance foregone by the courtiers. For once, Spain's overweening pride is justified: she boasts the loveliest royal residence of any nation.

An interesting time to visit it is at Guard Mount in the morning. Then, the beautiful inner court is filled with Lancers in plumed helmets and brilliant blue uniforms, riding splendidly matched roans. Two companies of infantry, in their darker blue and red, line the hollow square; and in the centre are the officers, magnificently mounted, and aglitter with gold braid and orders. They advance into the court, to the slow and stately measure of the Royal March; and sometimes the King appears on the balcony above—to the delight of the people, who are allowed to circulate freely in the passages of the pillared *patio*.

Peasants are there by the score, in their shabby earth-brown corduroys; and soft-eyed girls with stout duennas, swaying fans between the threadbare fingers of their cheap cotton gloves. Students with faded capes swung from their shoulders; swarms of children and shuffling old men in worn sombreros; priests, bull-fighters, beggars and venders of every thing from sweetmeats to bootlaces, wander in and out the arcades while the band plays.

In spite of the modern uniforms of the soldiers,

it is a scene out of another age: a sleepy, sunny age, when all the simple people demanded was a heel of bread and the occasional spectacle of the pomp of their masters. Yet it is the Spain of to-day; in the foreground its brave show of traditional splendour, peering out from behind, its penury and rags.

The old actor sees none of this. In his forgotten corner he has wound himself within his gorgeous tattered cloak of long ago; and crouches into it, eyes closed, upon a vision in which he never ceases to play the part of Cæsar.

## II

### HIS ARTS AND AMUSEMENTS

*PAN y toros!* The old "Bread and the circus!" of the Romans, the mediæval and modern "Bread and the bulls!" of Spain. One feels that the dance should have been worked in, really to make this cry of the people complete. For in the bull-fight and the ancient national dances we have the very soul of Spain.

Progressive Spaniards like to think the *corrida de toros* is gradually dying out; many, many people in Madrid, they tell you, would not think of attending one. This is true, though generally the motive behind it is financial rather than humane. And the great mass of the people, aristocracy as well as *bourgeoisie*, put the bulls first, and go hungry for the bread if necessary. Every small boy, be he royal or beggar, plays "bull-fight" from the time he can creep; every small girl looks on admiringly, and claps her hands. And when the small boy is grown, and dazzles the bull-ring with his daring *toreo*, the girl in her brilliant dancer's dress still applauds and flings him her carnations. Throughout Spain the

two are wedded in actual personal passion, as in symbolic truth.

It is said that the bull-fight was founded by the Moors in Spain in the twelfth century; though bulls were probably fought with before that in the Roman amphitheatres. The principle on which the play depends is courage, coolness, and dexterity—the three-in-one characteristics of the Arabs of the desert. In early days, gentlemen, armed only with a short spear, fought with the bulls, and proved their skill and horsemanship. But with the coming of the Bourbons as the reigning house of Spain the sport changed from a fashionable into a national one; and professional bull-fighters took the place of the courtly players of before.

It is by no means true, however (as so many foreigners imagine), that the *toreros* are invariably men of mean birth and vulgar education. On the contrary, they are frequently of excellent parentage and great mental as well as physical capability; while, always, their keen science and daring make them an aristocracy of themselves, which the aristocracy of birth delights to worship. They are the friends and favourites of society, the idols of the populace; you never see one of them in the streets without an admiring train of hangers-on, and the newspapers record the slightest item in connection with each fighter of the hour. Whole pages are

filled with photographs of the various feats and characteristic poses of distinguished *toreros*; and so well known do these become, that an audience in the theatre recognizes at once an "imitation" of Bombita, or Gallito, or Machaquito—and shouts applause.

Even the average bull-fighter is a rich man, and known for his generosity as well. Directly there is a disaster—railway accident, explosion, or flood—a *corrida* is arranged for the sufferers, and the whole band of fighters give their earnings to the cause. The usual profits of a skilled *torero* are seven thousand pesetas (£280) an afternoon. Out of this he must pay his assistants — about three thousand pesetas—and the rest he has for himself. When not the lover of some famous dancer, he is often a married man; and they say, aside from his dangerous profession, makes an excellent husband and father. One and all, the bull-fighters are religious; the last thing they do before entering the ring is to confess and receive absolution in the little chapel at the Bull-ring, and a priest remains with extreme unction always in readiness, in case of serious accident.

The greater part of the bull-fighters come from Andalucia (there is an academy at Seville to teach the science), but some are from the north and from Mexico and South America; and all are impatient to fight at Madrid, since successful *toreo* in this city constitutes the bull-fighter's diploma. At the first—

and so of course the most exciting—fight I saw, the *matadors* were Bombita and Gallito from Seville, and Gaona from Mexico. The latter was even more cordially received by the Spaniards than their own countrymen, after they saw his splendid play; but Bombita is acknowledged the best *banderillero* in Spain, and Gallito, a mere boy of eighteen, is adored by the people. Each of the three killed two bulls on the afternoon I attended my first *corrida*.

It is impossible to describe the change that comes over the whole aspect and atmosphere of Madrid on the day of a bull-fight. The old actor in his corner rubs his eyes, shakes himself, and looks alive. Crowds are in the streets, buckboards packed with country people dash through the Puerta del Sol and towards the Plaza de Toros; the languid *Madrileño* in the *cafés* is roused to rapid talk and excited betting with his neighbour; in the clubs, where the *toreros* are gathered in their gorgeous costumes, the betting runs higher. Ticket booths are surrounded by a mob of eager enthusiasts, while behind her grating the *señora* is shaking out her mantilla, fixing the great red and white carnations in her hair, draping the lace above them and her monstrous comb. A carriage drives swiftly down the street to her door, her husband hurries in, calling impetuously to make haste. The slumbrous eyes of the lady catch fire with a thousand sparks; she clicks her fan, flashes a

FAIR ENTHUSIASTS AT THE BULL FIGHT.

last triumphant smile into her mirror, and is swept away to the Bull-ring.

Here all is seething anticipation: the immense coliseum black with people moving to their seats or standing up to watch the crowd in the arena below; Royalty just arrived, Doña Isabel and her ladies lining the velvet-hung box, with their picturesque mantillas; the president of the Bull-ring taking his place of honour; ladies unfurling fans and gossiping; *aficionados* waving to one another across the ring and calling final excited bets; small boys shouting cushions, cigarettes, postcards, or beer and *horchatas*. Suddenly a bugle sounds. People scuttle to their seats, the arena is cleared as by magic, and, to a burst of music and thunderous applause from ten thousand pairs of hands, the splendid *entrada* takes place.

*Matadors* in their bright suits heavy with gold, *banderilleros* in their silver, *picadors* on their sorry horses, march proudly round the ring; while the band plays and the crowd shouts itself hoarse—just for a starter. Then the *picadors* go out, the *torero* who is to kill the first bull asks the president for the keys to the ring; the president throws them into the arena, and—the first bull is loosed!

From this point on there is no wit in regarding the spectacle from a humane or sentimental standpoint. He who is inclined to do so had better never

have left home. If he has eyes for the prodigal bloodshed, the torture of the bull with the piercing darts, the sufferings of the horses, he will be acutely wretched from beginning to end. But if he can fix his attention solely on the beauty of the *torero's* body in constant action, on the utter fearlessness and superb audacity of the man in his taunting the beast; if, in short, he can concentrate on the science and skill of the thing, he will have something worth remembering all his life.

I shall never forget Bombita, with his grave, curiously detached expression, his dark face almost indifferent as he came forward to kill the first bull. This is by far the most interesting part of the fight —after the horses have been disposed of, and the stupid *picadors* have made their exit—when the *matador* advances with his sword sheathed in the red *muleta.* He has made his speech to the president, he has ordered his assistants to retire to the background, and he and the bull face one another alone in the centre of the arena.

Then comes the lightning move of every moment in the encounter between man and beast. The spot between the shoulders where the bull is killed covers only about three inches, and must be struck absolutely true—or the crowd is furious. At best it is exceedingly capricious, hissing, whistling, and shouting on the slightest provocation, but going

[L. R. Marin

THE SUPREME MOMENT : MAN AND BEAST JUGGLE FOR LIFE.

literally mad over each incident of the *matador's* daring; and finally, if he makes a "neat kill," throwing their hats and coats—anything—into the arena, while the air reverberates with "Bravos!"

Meantime, however, the *matador* plays with death every second. He darts towards the bull, taunting the now maddened beast with the fiery *muleta*; mocking him, talking to him, even turning his back to him—only to leap round and beside him in the wink of an eye, when the bull would have gored him to death. Young Gallito strokes his second bull from head to mouth several times; Gaona lays his hat on the animal's horns, and carelessly removes it again; while Bombita, who is veritable quicksilver, has his magnificent clothes torn to pieces but remains himself unscratched, in his breath-taking manœuvres with the beast. Finally, with a swift gesture, he raises his arm, casts aside the *muleta*, drives his sword straight and true between the shoulders of his adversary. A shout goes up—wild as that of the Coliseum of old: "Bombita! Bombita! *El matador—Bombita!*" And we know that the bull is dead, but that Bombita, who has been teasing death, scoffing at it, for the last twenty minutes, lives—triumphant.

And what is it all about? Atrocious cruelty, a bit of bravado, and *ecco*! A hero! Exactly. Just as in the prize-ring, the football field, or an exhibi-

tion of jiu-jitsu. We pay to be shocked, terrified, and finally thrilled, by that which we have neither the skill nor the courage to attempt ourselves. But, you say, these other things are fair sport—man to man; we do not torture defenceless animals. What about fox-hunting? There is not even the dignity of danger in the English sport; if the hunter risks his life, it is only as a bad rider that he does so. And certainly the wretched foxes, fostered and cared for solely for the purpose of being harried to death, are treated to far more exquisite cruelty than the worn-out cab horses of the bull-fight—whose sufferings are a matter of a few minutes.

I am not defending the brutality of the bull-fight; I merely maintain that Anglo-Saxons have very little room to attack it, from the superiority of their own humaneness. And also, that Spaniards themselves are far from gloating over the sickening details of their sport, as they are often said to do. In every bull-fight I have ever attended, the crowd has been impatient, even exasperated, if the horses were not killed at once, and the *picadors* put out of the ring. We need not greater tolerance of cruelty, but greater knowledge of fact, in the study and criticism of things foreign to us. I doubt, for instance, if any person who has not lived in Madrid knows that every man who buys a ticket to the bull-fight is paying the hospital bill of some un-

fortunate; for the president of the Bull-ring is taxed ten thousand pounds a year for his privilege, and the Government uses this money for the upkeep of charity hospitals.

One cannot say as much for the proceeds of the stupid sport of cock-fighting—nor anything in its favour at all. Patrons of the cock-fight are for the most part low-browed ruffians with coarse faces, and given to loud clothes and tawdry jewellery. They stand up in their seats and scream bets at one another during the entire performance; each trying to find "takers," without missing a single incident of the contest. The bedlam this creates can only be compared with the wheat pit in Chicago; while to one's own mind, there is small sport in the banal encounter of one feathered thing with another, however gallant the two may be.

More to the Anglo-Saxon taste is the Spanish game of *pelota*: a kind of racquets, played in a three-sided oblong court about four times the length of a racquet court. The fourth side of the court is open, with seats and boxes arranged for spectators; and book-makers walk along in front, offering and taking wagers. At certain periods of the game there is much excitement.

It is played two on a side (sometimes more); the lighter men about half-way up the court, the stronger near the end. The ball used is similar to a

racquet ball, and is played the long way of the court; but instead of a bat, the player has a basket-work scoop which fits tight on his hand and fore-arm. The object of the game is for one side to serve the ball against the opposite wall, and for the other side to return it; so that the ball remains in play until a miss is scored by one of the two sides. Should the side serving fail to return, the service passes to the opponents. A miss scores one for the opponents, and the game usually consists of fifty points. There are the usual rules about fouls, false strokes, etc., but the fundamental principle consists in receiving the ball in the scoop and whacking it against the opposite wall. It sounds very simple, but the players show a marvellous agility and great endurance; the play being so rapid that from the spectator's point of view it is keenly entertaining.

Of course the upper classes in Madrid play the usual tennis, croquet, and occasionally polo; but the Spaniard is not by instinct a sportsman. Rather he is a gambler; which accounts for the increasing vogue for horse-racing in Madrid. The course, compared with Longchamps and Epsom, is rather primitive and the sport to be had is as yet inferior to the fashion and beauty to be seen. Intermissions are interminable—else how could the ladies see each other's frocks, or the gallants manage their flirting?

On the whole, the races in Spain are affairs of society rather than of sport.

Riding is very seldom indulged in by ladies, and the men who canter up and down the Castellana in the evening have atrocious seats and look thoroughly incongruous with their handsome mounts. There is practically no country life throughout Spain; the few families who own out-of-town houses rarely visit them, and still more rarely entertain at them. When the upper class leaves Madrid, it is for Biarritz, or San Sebastian, or Pau—some resort where they may satisfy the Spaniard's eternal craving, to see and be seen. This explains why the *Madrileño* is maladroit at those out-door sports he sometimes likes to affect as part of his Anglo-mania; but which he never really enjoys.

On the other hand, he adores what the French call the *vie d'intérieure*. Nothing interests him, or his *señora*, more than their day at home; which in Spanish resolves into a *tertulia*. No matter what time of day this informal reception takes place, ladies appear in morning dress—as the Anglo-Saxon understands the word; and visits are paid by entire families, so that sometimes the onslaught is rather formidable. Chocolate is served, about the consistency of oatmeal porridge, but deliciously light and frothy nevertheless. It is eaten instead of drunk, by means of little *tostas fritas* dipped into the cup.

Sometimes in the evening, meringues are served; but always the refreshments are of the simplest, the feast being one of chatter and familiar gossip rather than of stodgy cakes and salads.

When there is dancing, no sitting out or staircase flirtations are allowed; but on the other hand there is not the depressing row of chaperones round the walls nor the bored young men blocking the doorways during intermissions. Every one gathers in little groups and circles, the men keeping the stifling rooms in a constant haze of smoke; and wild hubbub of conversation goes on until the next dance. The foreigner is disappointed in Spanish dancing. Having in his mind the wonderful grace and litheness of the professional *bailarina*, he is shocked by the hop-skip-and-jump waltzing he meets with in drawing-rooms. The fact is that only in their own national or characteristic local dances are the Spanish graceful; when they attempt the modern steps of other countries, as when they attempt the clothes and sports of other countries, they become ridiculous.

But, happily for the young people, they do not know it; and during the ungainly waltz, they make up in ardent flirtation for the loss of the balconies, window-seats, and other corners *à deux* beloved by less formally trained youth. What goes on in the dance, duennas wink at. After all, the chief business of Spanish life is to marry off the children; and

when the latter are inclined to help matters along, so much the better.

In passing, it may be of interest to add that while the New Woman is an unknown quantity in Spain, the Spanish woman is the only one who retains her maiden name after marriage. Thus Señorita Fernandez becomes Señora Fernandez *de* Blank, and her children are called Fernandez *y* Blank. Also, if she is a lady of rank, her husband immediately assumes her title; and this last descends through the female line, if there are no sons. Such a law forms an interesting vagary of the country where woman's position on the whole reflects the Oriental. In Toledo there is a convent for the education of penniless daughters of noblemen. Each of the young ladies is given a dowry of two hundred pounds, and is eagerly sought in marriage as a person of importance. All this in accordance with the Spanish tradition that there is no such thing as an old maid.

Naturally in a land thoroughly orthodox in both religion and social convention, divorce is *tabu*; the solution of the unhappy marriage being intrigue—which is overlooked, or at the worst, separation—in which case the woman has rather a hard time of it. At best, she is completely under the thumb of her husband, and would lose her head altogether were she suddenly accorded the liberty of the American

woman, for example. I have often thought what a treasure one of these unaggressive *Españolas* would make for the brow-beaten American man; who, if he had a fancy to follow in the footsteps of his ambitious sisters, might buy a wife and a title, and (by purchase of property with a rental of ten thousand dollars) a life-seat in the senate—all at the same time!

And never, never again would he be seen with his hang-dog effacement, shuffling into a restaurant as a sort of ambulant peg for the wraps of a procession of ladies. Once a real Spaniard, he would stalk in first, at *cafés*; and find his own cronies, leaving madame to find hers in the separate "section for *señoras*." When he was ready to depart, she—no matter what her fever to finish the gossip of the moment—would depart without a murmur. Outrageous! cries the American; who pads his own leading-strings with the pretty word of "chivalry."

I think I have said that Spanish ladies do not attend restaurants, except those of the larger hotels; but they are devoted to *cafés*, where they eat chocolate and *tostas fritas*, or drink a curious (and singularly good) mixture of lemon ice and beer, while shredding the affairs of their neighbours. Owing to the segregation of the masculine and feminine contingents, the Madrid *café* presents a

quite different picture from the *rendez-vous intime* of the Parisian, or the *gemütlich* coffee-house of Vienna. There is no surreptitious holding of hands under the table, no laying of heads together over the illustrated papers, no miniature orchestra playing a sensuous waltz. The amusement of the *Madrileño* in his favourite *café*, is to look out of it on to the street; of the *Madrileña*, ditto—each keeping up a running fire of chatter the while.

The manners of both ladies and gentlemen are somewhat startling at times. Toothpicks are constantly in evidence, some of the more exclusive carrying their own little instruments of silver or gold; and producing them from pocket or hand-bag whenever the occasion offers. It is not uncommon, either, for ladies as well as gentlemen to expectorate in public; in *cafés*, or even from carriages on the Castellana, one sees this done with perfect *sangfroid*. On the other hand, there is an absolute simplicity and freedom from affectation. With all their interest in the appearance and affairs of their neighbours, Spanish men and women are without knowledge of the word "snob." So thoroughly grounded in that unconscious assurance newer civilization lacks, they would not know how to set about "impressing" any one. They are what they are, and there's an end to it.

When they stare, as the foreigner complains they do constantly, it is the frankly direct stare of a child. And few ladies use pince-nez—for which they have the excellent word *impertinentes.* Some of these Spanish words are delightfully descriptive: there is *sabio-mucho*, for the little donkeys that trot ahead of the mules in harness, and in their careful picking of the way, prove their title of "know-it-all." And there is *serreno* for the night-watchman, who prowls his district every hour, to assure the inhabitants that "it is three o'clock, and the night serene!"

To the English night-owl, the custom of leaving one's latch-key with the *serreno* appeals as rather precarious, in several ways. But Spaniards are notoriously temperate; also discreet; and as Spanish keys are apt to weigh a pound or two, it is the easiest thing for the *señor* when he reaches his own door to clap his hands twice—and the *serreno* comes running. It seems a quaint custom to have a night-watchman in a city like Madrid, where life goes on all night; and the Puerta del Sol is as full and as noisy at half-past three in the morning, as at the same hour of the afternoon.

All the best amusements begin very late, following the rule of the nine-o'clock dinner; and as theatre tickets are purchased in sections (*i.e.* for each separate act or piece), it is generally arranged

so that the finest part of the performance begins at half after ten, or even eleven o'clock. Of course the Teatro Real, or opera-house, is the first theatre of Madrid; and we have already spoken of the sacrifices endured for the privilege of owning a box for the season.

Ladies of society — and some who are not — delight to receive in their *palcos*; and the long *entr'actes* lend themselves to actual visits, instead of the casual "looking-in" of friends. Any one, by paying the nominal entrance fee, can enter the opera-house (or any theatre), on the chance of finding acquaintances in the boxes; and so spend an hour or two going from one group to another. This gives the house the look of a vast reception, which it is, far more than a place where people come to hear good music.

It has not, however, the brilliancy or fascination of the Metropolitan audience in New York, nor of Covent Garden. The Teatro Real is a mediocre building, in the first place; and neither the toilettes and jewels of the women, nor the distinction of the men, can compare with the splendid *ensemble* of an English or American opera audience; while the music, after Vienna, is execrable, and merits the indifference the *Madrileños* show it. About the most interesting episode of the evening comes after the performance is over—when on the pretext

of waiting for carriages, society lingers in the entrance hall, chatting, laughing, engaged in more or less mild flirtation—for the better part of an hour. Here one sees the *Madrileña* at her best; eyes flashing, jewels sparkling, fan swaying back and forth to show or again to conceal her brave "best gown": above all, smiling her slow Eastern-woman's smile with a grace that makes one echo her adorers' exclamation, "At your feet, *señora*!"

She is seen to less advantage at the ordinary theatre, which is usually in itself a dingy affair; and where evening dress is conspicuous by its absence. Even the orchestra is apt to come garbed in faded shades of the popular green or brown, and always with hats on—until the curtain rises.

We have spoken already of the prevalence of the one-act play in Spanish theatres. The people pay an average charge of two *reales* (fivepence) for each small piece, and the audience changes several times during an evening. At the better theatres stalls are three shillings—a price to be paid only by the very wealthy!—and the plays are generally unadulterated melodrama. The always capricious audience cheers or hisses in true old melodramatic fashion; so that at the most touching moment of a piece, one cannot hear a word of it for the piercing *bravos*—or again, catch the drift of the popular displeasure which shows itself in groans and whistling. The complete

A TYPICAL POSTURE OF THE SPANISH DANCE.

*naïveté* of the Spanish character is nowhere better displayed than at the theatre; but I think it must keep the actors in a constant fever of suspense.

The latter are rather primitive in method and appearance, according to modern notions; but play their particular *genre* with no small cleverness. They use little or no make-up, so that the effect at first is rather ghastly; however, one gets used to it, and even comes to prefer it to the over-rouged cheeks and exaggerated eyes of the Anglo-Saxon artist. It is interesting, too, that even in the world of make-believe the Spaniard is as little make-believe as possible. There is nothing artificial in his composition, and even when professionally "pretending" he pretends along the line of his own strong loves and hates, with no attempt at subtilizing either.

One is apt to think there is no subtlety at all in this people—until one sees its popular dancers. After the banal "Boston" and one-step of the ultra-moderns, the old ever-beloved Spanish dances come as a revelation; while the professional *bailarina* herself is as far removed from her kind in other lands, as poetry from doggerel.

Tall, swayingly slender, delicately sensuous in every move, she glides into vision in her ankle-long full skirts, like a flower rising from its calyx. There is about her none of the self-consciousness of the familiar lady of tarlatans and tights; but a little air

of dignity on guard, that is very alluring. She does not smirk, she does not pirouette; she sways, and bends, and rises to stamp her foot in the typical *bozneo*, with a litheness and grace indescribable. And her castanets! Long before she actually appears, you hear their quick *toc-toc*: first a low murmur, then louder and ever louder, till with her proud entrance they beat a tempestuous allegro—only to grow fainter and fainter and die away again, with the slow measure of the dance.

Her long princess frock sheathes the slim figure closely, to swell out, however, at the ankles in a swirl of foamy flounces. Brilliant with sequins, or the multi-coloured broidery of the *mantón*, the costume curls about her in a gorgeous haze of orange, azure, mauve and scarlet while she dances. Her fine long feet are arched and curved into a thousand different poses; her body the mere casing for a spirit of flame and mystery; her face the shadow-curtain of infinite expression, infinite light.

And while her castanets are sounding every shade of rhythm and seduction, and her long white arms are swaying to and fro—in the ancient *Jota*, or the *Olé Andaluz*, or perhaps in the *Sevillana*, or the *Malagueña*—the dance of her particular city; while men's throats grow hoarse with shouting *bravos* and women's eyes dim with staring at such grace, there lives before one not La Goya, La Argentina,

Pastora Império—not the idol-favourite of the hour, but something more wonderful and less substantial: the ghost of old Spain. It flits before one there, in its proud glory; its beauty, its passion, and its power; baring the soul of half of it—the woman soul, that is.

And when one looks beyond her fire and lovely dignity, over her shoulder peers the cool, dark face of a *torero*.

## III

### HIS PROUDEST SCENE TO-DAY

TWENTY-EIGHT years ago Alfonso XII. died, leaving a consort whom the Spanish people regarded with suspicion, if not with actual dislike. She was Maria Christina of Austria, the second wife of the King; and six months after his death, her son Alfonso XIII. was born.

Sullenly, Spain submitted to the long regency of a "foreigner"; and Maria Christina set about the desperate business of saving her son to manhood. From the first he was an ailing, sickly child, and his mother had to fight for him in health as well as in political position, every inch of the way. She was tireless, dauntless, throughout the struggle. Time after time the little King's life was despaired of; she never gave up.

Every morning during his childhood the boy was driven to the bracing park of El Pardo, where he ate his lunch and stayed all day; only coming back to Madrid to sleep. In this and a hundred other ways it was as though his mother, with her steel courage, literally forbade him to die. And to-day,

for her reward, she has not only a king whom the entire world admires with enthusiasm, but a son whose devotion to herself amounts almost to a passion.

I like to remember my first glimpse of the King —it was so characteristic of his personal simplicity in the midst of a Court renowned for its rigid ceremonial. I was one of the crowd that lined the Palace galleries on a Sunday before Public Chapel; we were herded between rows of halberdiers, very stiff and hushed, waiting for the splendid procession soon to come.

Suddenly the cry rose: "*El Rey!*" And attended only by two gentlemen, and a grey-haired lady in black, the King came down the corridor. He was in striking blue uniform, and wore the collar of the Golden Fleece; but what occurred to one first was his buoyant look of youth, and his smile—as the Spaniards say, "very, very *simpatico*." He saluted to right and left, skimming the faces of the crowd with that alertness that makes every peasant sure to the end of his days that the King certainly saw *him*. Then he stooped, while one of his gentlemen held open a little door much too low for him, and slipped quickly through to the other side. "Exactly," murmured an old woman disappointedly, "like any one else."

That is a large part of the greatness of this King,

as it was of Edward VII. of England: he is exactly like any one else. And like any one else he must submit to a routine and certain obligatory duties which are utterly irksome to him. When he came back from Chapel later, in the tedious procession, his face was quite pale, and he looked tired out. With all his mother's indefatigable care and training, his health at best is very irregular; and I remember hearing one of his guards say that he would have died long ago if he could have taken time for it!

But to go back to Royal Chapel: on the days when this is public, any one, beginning with the raggedest peasant, may walk into the Palace and upstairs to the galleries, as though he were a prince of the blood. True, if he arrives early, he must stand in line; to be moved along as the guards shall direct. But if he comes, as I did, just before the hour, he walks upstairs and along the thick-carpeted corridors, to take his place where he chooses. Of course one is literally barricaded by halberdiers—two of them to every three persons, as a rule—and a very imposing line they make, in their scarlet coats, white knee-breeches and black gaiters, their halberds glittering round the four sides of the galleries.

These are hung, on one or two gala Sundays a year, with marvellous old tapestries; so that not an inch of stone wall can be seen. It makes a beautiful background for the gold lace and rich uniforms of

the grandees as they pass through, on their way to the Assembly Chamber. For half an hour before the procession forms, these gorgeous personages are arriving; many of them in the handsome Court costume of black, finely worked in gold embroidery, and with the picturesque lace ruff. Others wear various and splendid uniforms, with ribbons of special orders, and of course every medal they can produce, strung across their chests. Some of the older men are particularly distinguished; while all the officers stalk in, in the grand manner, shoulders square, swords clanking.

An especially interesting group is the Estada Mayor —six grandees out of the seven hundred odd who wear a gold key over their right hip, as a sign that they may enter the palace and confer with the sovereign at any time. These men have the title of Marqués in addition to any others they may have inherited, and are supposed to spend one week, each, in the palace during the year. They are tall, splendid-looking creatures, in bright red coats, white trousers with black boots, and helmets with waving white feathers. And on Public Chapel days they enter last into the Assembly Chamber; so that their appearance is the signal that the procession is about to start.

When they have gone in, the chief of the halberdiers cries: "The King! Do me the favour

to uncover your heads!" And we do him the favour, while detectives all about are taking a final sharp survey of the closely guarded crowd. Then two plainly dressed persons, known by the modest title of *bandero* (sweeper), hurry up and down the line to make sure no presumptuous subject has his feet on the royal carpet; and, finally, two ancient major-domos in scarlet breeches and much gold lace, solemnly march several yards ahead of the procession, peering searchingly from right to left. For, as every one knows, the King of Spain's life is in momentary danger, from anarchists; and no amount of precaution ever really satisfies the inquietude of his people when he is in public.

At last the dignified line of grandees appears. Some of them we recognize, as they go by: the Duke of Medina y Cœli, with his twenty-eight titles, the most of any noble in Spain; the Duke of Alba, who holds the oldest title, and the head of whose family always registers a formal protest on the accession of each king—with the insinuation, of course, that by right of birth the Alba should reign. Farther on come the three royal princes, Don Carlos, Don Alfonso (cousin of the King), and Don Fernando. And, finally, between his two *gentilhombres*, the King.

It is not the boyish young man now, slipping inconspicuously from one room to another; but the

7. Don Fernando. 8. The Queen Mother. 9. Princess Henry of Battenberg. (Third from the right in the front row is the favourite little Prince Jaime.)

THE ROYAL FAMILY OF SPAIN, AFTER A CHAPEL SERVICE.

*L. K. Marin*

sovereign, erect and on duty, facing his rows of scrutinizing subjects steadily and with a quiet confidence. I should like more than most things to have a true picture of him at that moment, walking unself-consciously in the midst of his haughty Court. On all sides of him pomp and stateliness: the lovely old tapestries, the rich shrines at every corner of the galleries, the brilliant uniforms of the tall halberdiers, the dazzling garb of the grandees and the flashing jewels of their ladies: amongst all this magnificence, the King walking with truest dignity, yet utterly *sans façon.* He had even, behind the gravity due the occasion, the hint of a twinkle in his eye; as though to say, "It's absurd, isn't it, that all this is for me? That a plain man who likes to ride, and to shoot, and to prowl round in the forest with his dogs, should be the centre of this procession as King of Spain! Really, it's almost a joke."

I'm sure he actually was thinking that; for he has a delightful sense of humour, besides being wholly natural; and he and the Queen are noted for their simplicity, and their readiness to be considered as ordinary humans. The King, in walking to and from Chapel, passes close enough to the people for any one of them to reach out and touch him; and his alert eyes seem to convey, with his frank smile, individual greeting to each person

present. No one can look even once into that ugly, animated face, without feeling both the magnetism and the tremendous courage with which Alfonso XIII. rules Spain.

On this morning that I saw him, the Queen was not present; but usually she walks with him to Chapel, and is extravagantly admired by the people, who find her blonde beauty *hermosisima* and her French gowns the last word of elegance. Both she and the Queen-mother reached the Chapel by an inner entrance on the day of which I speak; so that the Infantas Isabel and Maria Luisa with their ladies followed the King.

Doña Isabel, with her strong, humorous face, and white hair, is always an interesting figure. She is constantly seen at the bull-fight, and driving through the Puerta del Sol or in the Castellana; and is generally wearing the mantilla. This morning she wore a very beautiful white one, held by magnificent diamond clasps, and falling over a brocade dress of great richness. Her train, carried by a Marqués of the Household, was of white satin embroidered in iris, and clusters of the flower were scattered over the stuff itself.

The Infanta Maria Luisa, who is considered one of the most beautiful of all princesses, was also in white satin and a white mantilla, and looked exceedingly Spanish and attractive. She had wonder-

ful jewels, a string of immense pearls being among the most prominent; and a great emerald cabochon that hung from a slender chain. Each of the Infantas had her lady-in-waiting, also in Court train and the mantilla; and one could not help reflecting how much more picturesque and becoming this latter is, than the stiff three feathers prescribed by the English tradition. On the other hand, it is true that only Spanish ladies know how to wear the gracious folds of lace which on women of other nations appear incongruous and even awkward.

After the Infantas and their ladies, came the diplomats and various foreign ambassadors, all in full regalia; and, finally, the six officers of the Estada Mayor brought up the rear. I have forgotten to mention the band of the Palace Guards which preceded the entire procession, and played the royal march all this while. I think there can be no music at once so grave and so inspiring as this is; if it thrills the imagination of the foreigner, what must it mean to the Spaniard with his memories?

When the Court had passed into the Chapel, the crowd was at liberty to break ranks and walk about the galleries. During this intermission the detectives were again in evidence, scouring the place for any signs of violence. Since the King was fired at, on the day of the swearing-in of the recruits (13th April 1913), efforts to protect his life have been redoubled.

This was the third attack on him since his marriage, including the terrible episode of his wedding-day itself.

On that occasion, when the bomb that was thrown at him, as he was leaving the church with the Queen, killed thirty-six people and caused the Queen's wedding-dress to be spattered with blood, the poor bride in her terror was on the point of collapsing. Through the babel of screams and shouting, the King spoke to her distinctly : "The Queen of Spain never faints!" said he. And he assisted her to another carriage, and drove off, coolly, as though nothing had happened.

Again, at the time of the attack last April, the King was the first to see the man rushing towards him, pistol uplifted. Instantly he started forward, on his horse, to ride down the assassin ; and when the shots rang out, and people realized what was happening, the King was the first to reach his would-be murderer, and to protect him from the mob. Then the crowd forgot the criminal, and went mad over the sovereign. Spaniards themselves say that never has there been such a demonstration for any monarch, in the history of Madrid. One can imagine the tingling pride of those recruits, who, when the confusion was past, had still to go through the impressive ceremony of kissing the cross made by their sword against the flag : what

[*L. R. Marin.*

KING ALFONSO SWEARING IN THE RECRUITS ON THE DAY OF THE ATTEMPT ON HIS LIFE (APRIL 13, 1913).

it must have meant to swear allegiance to such a man at such a moment. As I heard a young girl say at the time, "There is just one adjective that describes him: he's *royal*, through and through."

He looked more than ever royal when, coming back from Chapel, he knelt, head bared, before the shrine at our end of the gallery. All the procession now carried lighted candles, and their number was increased by the bishop and richly clad priests who had conducted service. At each of the four shrines they halted, while prayers were sung; and one was struck with the opportunity this offered for an attack upon the King. As he knelt there, head lowered between the two lines of people, he made an excellent mark for the anarchist's pistol; but, as usual, seemed utterly unconscious of his danger.

The Court, on its knees, looked very bored, and made no pretence at devoutness while the beautiful *Aves* were being sung. But the King played his part to the end, with a dignity rather touching in such a frankly boyish man; though when the ceremony was over, he heaved a very natural sigh of relief as he rose to his feet again.

Back stalked the "sweepers," the old major-domos, the haughty grandees; back came Don Carlos, Don Ferdinand, Don Alfonso. And then, for the fourth time that morning so near us, the King; smiling, with his first finger on his helmet,

in the familiar gesture. The Infantas followed him, then the diplomats; finally, the six nobles of Estada Mayor. The chief of the halberdiers pounded on the floor with his halberd; the guards broke ranks, the people surged out of line and towards the stairs—and Royal Chapel was ended.

Yet not quite, for me. Thanks to a friend in the Estada Mayor, I had still to see one of the finest pictures of the morning: the exit from the palace of the famous Palace Guards. Six abreast they came, down the grand staircase of the beautiful inner court, two hundred strong as they filed out to their solemn bugle and drum. All of them men between six and seven feet, in their brilliant red and black and white uniform, I shall never forget the sight they made, filling the splendid royal stairs. They seemed the living incarnation of the old Spanish spirit; the spirit of Isabella's time, but none the less of that heroic woman of to-day, who, though not of Spanish blood herself, has given to Spain a king to glory in and revere.

## IV

### HIS FOLLIES AND FINENESSES

"THE salient trait of the Spanish character," says Taine, "is a lack of the sense of the practical." For want of it, Ferdinand and Isabella themselves—the greatest rulers Spain ever had—drove the Moors and the Jews out of the country, and laid the corner-stone of its ruin. Far from realizing they were expelling, by the hundred thousand, their most wealthy and intelligent subjects, the Catholic sovereigns saw only the immediate religious triumph; the immediate financial gain, of confiscating the estates of the infidels, and refusing to harbour them within their realm.

Time after time, the blind arrogance of the Spaniard as champion of orthodoxy throughout the world, has rebounded against him in blows from which he will never recover. The Inquisition in itself established a hereditary fear of personal thinking, that remains the stumbling-block in the way of Spanish progress to this day. Too, the natural indolence of the people inclines them to accept without question the statements and standards

handed down from their directors in Church or State.

Some of these are so absurd as to call for pity rather than exasperation on the part of outsiders. For example, the conviction of even educated Spaniards with regard to the recent war with the United States, is that the latter won because they sent out every man they had; while Spain was too indifferent to the petty issues involved to go to the expense of mustering troops. Half the nation has no idea what those issues were, nor of the outcome of the various battles fought over them; indeed, so distorted were the accounts of the newspapers and the governmental reports, that Admiral Cervera was welcomed home to Spain with as much enthusiasm, if not as much ceremony, as was Admiral Dewey to America!

The few insignificant changes in the map resulting from that war, the Spaniard tells you seriously, came from foul play on the part of *los Yankees*. That the stubborn ignorance and meagre resources of his own countrymen had anything to do with it, he would scout with utter scorn. And this, not from a real and intense spirit of patriotism, but because he is for ever looking back over his shoulder at the glories of the past, until they are actually in his mind the facts of the present.

There is little intelligent patriotism throughout

Spain, the local partisan spirit of old feudalism taking its place. Thus Castilians look down on Andalucians; Andalucians show a bland pity for Aragonese; Catalonians hate and are hated by every other tribe in the country; while the Basques coolly continue to this day to declare that they are not Spaniards, but a race unto themselves.

The extraordinary oath with which they accept each king, on his accession, is luminous: "We who are as good as you, and who are more powerful than you, elect you king in order that you may protect our rights and liberties." It scarcely expresses a loyalty with which to cement provinces into a united kingdom! But it must be remembered that the monarchs of the past have made a scarecrow of loyalty, with their draining wars for personal aggrandizement, and the terrible persecutions of their religious bigotry. The people themselves are far from being to blame for their lack of patriotism, or the mediæval superstition which with them takes the place of intelligent faith.

Catholics of other countries are revolted by what they see in their churches in Spain. The shrine of one famous Virgin is hung with wax models of arms and legs, purchased by devotees praying relief from suffering in these members. Childless women have added to the collection small wax dolls; also braids of their own hair, sacrificed to hang in the gruesome

row beside the altar. Looking at these things, hearing the fantastic stories told (and firmly believed) about them, one can with difficulty realize that one is in a Christian country of the twentieth century.

On the other hand, there is a respect shown religion, and the mysteries of life and death, which is impressive in this callous age of materialism. Spanish women invariably cross themselves when passing a church—whether on foot, or in a tram or carriage; and every man, grandee or peasant, uncovers while a funeral procession goes by. I have noticed this especially on days of the big bull-fights, when the trams are packed to the doors: not a man, whatever his excitement over the approaching *corrida*, or his momentary interest in his neighbour, omits the instinctive gesture of respect when a hearse passes. Which, alas, it does very often in Madrid; pathetically often, bearing the small casket of a child. It is said that a Spaniard, once grown to maturity, lives for ever; but the mothers consider themselves fortunate if they save only half of their many children to manhood or womanhood. This is so literally true, that one woman who had had sixteen said to me quite triumphantly, "And eight are alive! And my sister, who had fourteen, now has seven."

One has not to search far for the cause of this terrible mortality. In the first place, it is a

case of inbreeding; no new blood having come into the country since the Jews and Moors left it. In the second, the simplest laws of personal or public hygiene are unheard of. Even among the lower middle class, for a mother to nurse her child is a disgrace not to be endured; and the peasant women to whom this duty is entrusted are appallingly ignorant, and often of filthy personal habits. From its birth a baby is given everything it cries for—or is supposed to cry for; including cheese, pieces of meat with rice, oranges, fried potatoes, and sweetmeats of every description.

This applies not only to the poorer classes but to people of supposed education and enlightenment. When the child is two or three years old, it comes to the table with the family; though the hours of Spanish meals are injudicious even for grown persons. The early cup of chocolate is had generally about ten or eleven, luncheon is at half after one, dinner between half after eight and nine. When this is over, the parents take the children to walk in the streets, or to the stifling air and lurid entertainment of the cinema. They all go to bed about midnight, or later; and the parents cannot understand why, under such a régime, the children should have the nerves and waxen whiteness of little old men and women. Until I went to Spain, I had always considered the French child the most ill-treated in

the world; but I now look upon his upbringing as positively model, compared with the ignorance and hygienic outrage visited upon the poor little *español.*

Yet no people love their children more passionately, or sacrifice for them more heroically, than do the Spaniards. It is simply that in the laws of health, as in everything, their conception is that of bygone centuries. In railway carriages, trams, restaurants, and *cafés*, they sit through the hottest months of summer with every door and window tight shut. More than once on the train, I have been obliged to stand in the corridor all day, because my five carriage companions insisted on sealing us for ten hours or more within an airless compartment eight feet square. Even in their own carriages on the Castellana, the *Madrileños* drive up and down in the months of July and August with the windows entirely closed. One does not wonder at theirs being a pale and listless race, attacked by all manner of disease.

It must be remembered throughout this discussion, that we are dealing with the general mass of the people; though with the mass drawn from all classes. There is in Madrid the same ultra-smart set (augmented largely by wealthy South Americans), the same set of *littérateurs* and artists, the same set of charming and distinguished cosmopolitans, that

one finds in every big city. But in the Spanish capital, these shining exceptions are so far in the minority as to have very limited power to leaven the mental stodginess of society as a whole.

The King and Queen, by their open fondness for foreigners, and (quite naturally) for the English in particular, have set the fashion for the Anglomania that rules a certain portion of the aristocracy. As in Paris, a number of English words are currently used, but with a pronunciation apt to make the polite Britisher's lip twitch at times. The "Boy Scoots," for example, are a favourite topic of conversation in progressive drawing-rooms; while the young bloods are wont to declare themselves, eagerly, keen for good "spor" and "the 'unt." In the English Tea Rooms—always crowded with Spaniards—I have even been gravely corrected for my pronunciation of "scones." "The *señor* means *theonais*," says the little waiter, in gentle Castilian.

Many *Madrileños* affect English tailoring, though the results are a bit startling as a rule. Brown and green, in their most emphatic shades, vie with one another for popularity; and checks or stripes seen on a Spanish Brummel, *are* checks or stripes —no indecision on the part of the pattern. Women, of course, look to Paris for their fashions; but Paris is too subtle for them, and they copy her creations in colours frankly strident. Orange and cerise,

bright blue and royal purple, share the *señora's* favour; while to be really an *élégante*, her hair must be tinted yellow, her face a somewhat ghastly white.

An interesting variation of conventional feminine standards is this tendency of the *chic Madrileña* to appear like a French *cocotte*; while the women of the *demi-monde* themselves are demurely garbed in black, without make-up, without pretension of any sort. But all women, to be desirable, must be fat. Not merely plump, as Anglo-Saxons understand the word, but distinctly on the ample side of *embonpoint*. The only obesity cures in Spain are for men; women, including actresses, professional beauties, and even dancers, live to put on flesh.

One explanation of this curious and, to our taste, most unæsthetic idea of feminine beauty, is as another of those relics of Orientalism constantly cropping up in the study of the Spanish character. I often wonder, when I see a slender Spanish girl, if she will ever be driven to the extremity of the "Slim Princess" of musical-comedy fame, who, when all else failed, filled her frock with bolsters and her cheeks with marshmallows, and then unfortunately—sneezed.

If you told that story to a *Madrileño*, he would answer seriously, "Oh, but no Spanish girl would ever think of such a foolish thing." I am sure, on

second thoughts, that she would not. That is, in fact, of all Spanish faults the gravest: they never, never think of foolish things. Only the King dares laugh at himself, and at the weighty affairs of his family. Last year, just after the publication of the memoirs of a certain royal lady of the House, and the high scandal that ensued, a new little infanta was born. In presenting her to his ministers on the traditional gold platter, the King said with his dry grin: "I have already told her she is never to write a book!"

Speaking generally, however, the Spanish sense of humour is not over-acute. I doubt, for instance, if any other people could solemnly arrange and carry out a bull-fight for the benefit of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Yet this actually occurred in Madrid a few years ago; and the *Madrileños* will tell you with much pride, though the seats were much dearer than at other bull-fights, *every one* was filled by some patron of the noble cause!

Like all people of prodigious dignity, the old actor never sees the funny side of his performance. He will go off into gales of laughter over the mere shape of a foreigner's hat; but, himself, says and does the most absurd things without the slightest jolt to his personal soberness. An English lady in Madrid told me of a case in point: she was visiting

one of the unique foundling convents of Spain, where superfluous babies may be placed in an open basket in the convent wall; the bell that is rung, swinging the basket inside at the same time. My friend was trying to learn more of this highly practical institution, but the nuns whom she questioned were so overwhelmed with amusement at her boots, they could only look at her and giggle.

Finally, in despair, she concluded, "Well, at least tell me how many children are brought to you a year!"

By supreme effort one of the sisters recovered her gravity. "We receive about half a baby a day, *señora*," she said sedately; and could not understand why the lady smiled.

That continual rudeness in the matter of staring and laughing at strangers was at first a great surprise to me—who had always heard of the extravagant politeness of the Spaniard. I came to know that he is polite only along circumscribed lines—until he knows you. After that, I believe that you could take him at the literal words of his lavish offers, and burn his house, or dismantle it entirely, without protest on his part. Though too poor to invite you to a meal, he will call at your hotel twice a day to leave flowers from his garden, and declare himself at your disposition; or to take you to drive in the Castellana. He will go to any amount of

trouble to prepare small surprises for you: a box of sweets, that he has had made specially; a bit of majolica he has heard you admire; an old fan that is an heirloom of his family: every day there is something new, some further token of his friendship and thought.

It is true that, even when able to afford it, he shows an Eastern exclusiveness about inviting you to his house. I know English people who have lived in Madrid seventeen years, without having been once inside the doors of some of their Spanish friends. But this is racial habit: the old Oriental tradition of the home being sacred to the family itself; not personal slight, or snobbishness. There is in it, however, a certain caution which offends the franker hospitality of the Anglo-Saxon. To go into petty detail, I for one have never been able to overcome my resentment of the brass peep-holes (in every Spanish door) through which the servant peers out at you before he will let you in. I realize that my irritation is quite as childish as their precaution; but I cannot lose sight of the plain impudence of the thing.

The same is true of their boundless interest in one's affairs. Peasants, shop-keepers, well-dressed ladies and gentlemen—every one!—will gather round to hear a simple question addressed to a policeman in the street. They take it for granted that no

foreigner speaks Spanish, and when the contrary proves the case, their curiosity and amazement are increased tenfold.

I was once in the office of a French typewriter company of Madrid, arranging to rent a machine. During the intervals in which the agent and I conversed in French, he discussed my requirements, appearance, and probable profession with a postman, a delivery-boy, an officer who came in to buy pens, and the two young lady stenographers in the next room. In Spanish, of course, all this; which I, as a foreigner, could not possibly understand.

This happens over and over again, especially at *pension* tables, where one gleans astounding information as to the geography and customs of one's country (from various good Spaniards who have never left their own), until a modest request for the salt—proffered in Castilian — throws the entire company into horrified confusion. Even then, they will go on to comment most candidly to one's face on the peculiarities and generally inferior character of one's countrymen. But if you turn the tables ever so discreetly, they retort in triumph: "Then, why have you come to Spain? If your own country pleases you, why don't you stay there?"

Travel for amusement or education is simply outside their comprehension — naturally enough, since it is outside the possibilities of most of them

to-day, as it was in the Middle Ages. We have already seen their ideas of other countries to be of the most naïve. I have been seriously congratulated by *Madrileños* on the privilege of beholding so fine a thoroughfare as the Castellana, such splendid shops as the handful scattered along San Geronimo, such a wonderful building as the Opera-House, which they fondly believe "the most beautiful in the world." They are generously delighted for me that, after the primitive hotels I must have known in other countries, I can enjoy for a while the magnificence of their modern "P——ce."

They, alas, are too poor to enjoy it. I think there is something almost tragic in this fact, that the entire society of Madrid cannot support the very moderate charges of the one first-class hotel in the city. When one thinks of the dozens of luxurious stopping-places in London, New York, and Paris—always crowded by a mob of vulgar people with their purses overflowing, it seems actually cruel that the *vieille noblesse* of the Spanish capital have no money for the simple establishment they admire with child-like extravagance. The old actor does so delight in pomp—of even the mildest variety; and his youthful shortsightedness has left him so pitiably unable to secure it, now in the beggardom of his old age.

Half a dozen years ago the porter of a friend of mine in Madrid won a lottery prize of two thousand

pounds. No sooner come into this fabulous wealth, than he and his wife proceeded to rent a house on the Castellana, a box at the opera, another at the bull-ring; and, of course, the indispensable carriage and pair. The *señor* had his clubs and racers, the *señora* her jewels, and frocks from Paris; they amazed Madrid with their magnificence.

At the end of six months the two thousand pounds were gone; and the couple went back to the porter's lodge, where they have lived happily ever since. Could one make the last assertion of two people of any other race, in the same circumstances? Certainly not of two Americans! But, of course, had they been Americans, they would promptly have invested the ten thousand dollars, and doubled it; in five years they would probably have been "millionaires from the West." Not so the ingenuous Spaniards. With no thought for the morrow, they proceeded to outdo all competitors in making a gorgeous to-day; and when that was done, retired without bitterness to rest on their laurels.

In all of which the good couple may have been wiser than they seem. Being true children of their race—that is, without the first instincts for "making money"—they would naturally have taken what they had won, and stretched it carefully over the remaining half-century of their lives. So they could have existed in genteel poverty, without working.

As it was, they had their fling—such a one as to set Madrid by the ears; they are still famous for their unparalleled prodigality; and they jog along in the service to which they were born, utterly content if at the end of the day they have an hour or two in which to gloat over their one-time splendour. When I think of the enforced scrimping and soul-shrivelling calculation of the average *Madrileño*, I am always glad to remember two who threw their bonnets over the mill, and had what Americans call "one grand good time."

It is impossible to conclude this cursory glance at some of the more striking of Spanish characteristics without mention of the two finest: honesty and lack of self-interest. They go hand in hand throughout this country of rock-rooted impulse, and are for ever surprising one used to the modern rule of look-sharp-or-be-worsted. My first shock was in the Rastro (the old Thieves' Market of Madrid), when an old man candidly informed me that the chain I admired was not of gold. It had every appearance of gold, and I should have bought it as such; but the shabby old salesman shook his head, and gave it to me gladly for ninepence.

As Taine tells us, the Spanish are not practical; which endows them, among other things, with the unprofitable quality of honour. In Toledo, just as I was taking the train, I discovered that I had lost

my watch. It occurred to me that I might have dropped it in the cab our party had had for a long drive that afternoon; but when the hotel proprietor telephoned to the stables he found that the cab had not yet returned. "However," he told me confidently, "to-morrow the *cosaria* goes to Madrid, and if the watch is found she can bring it to you."

The *cosaria* (literally, "thing-woman") is an institution peculiar to Spain; she goes from town to town delivering parcels, produce, and what not,—in short, she is the express company. Of course, I never expected to see my watch again, but before six o'clock of the following day the *cosaria* appeared at my door in Madrid with the article lost in Toledo —seventy miles away. The charge for her services was two pesetas (one and fourpence). When I suggested a reward for the coachman, she replied with amazement that it would be to insult him! I have visions of an English cabby running risk of such "insult." He would have been at the pawnshop and got his two guineas long since.

An American friend of mine who conducts a school for girls in Madrid, tells of a still rarer experience. One day her butcher came to her in great distress. He had been going over his books, and he found that the price his assistant had been charging the school for soup-bones (daily delivered) was twice what it should have been. This, said he with abject

regret, had been going on unknown to him since the first of the year; he therefore owed the *señora* nine hundred pesetas (£32) for bones, and begged her to accept this sum on the spot, together with his profoundest apologies.

I call such experiences rare, yet they are of every-day occurrence in Spain; so that one knows it was not here that Bryon said, "I never trust manners, for I once had my pocket picked by the civillest gentleman I ever met with!" In Spain manners and morals have an original habit of walking out together, and one need not, as in other countries, fear a preponderance of the former as probable preclusion of the latter. That lack of the practical sense, which we wise analyists deplore, has its engaging side when it brings back our watch, or saves us paying a gold price for brass.

In the matter of servants, too, one is allured by a startling readiness on their part to do as much as, and even more than, they are paid for. After the surly thanks and sour looks of the New York or London menial for anything under a shilling, the broad smile of the Spanish for twopence is quite an episode in one's life. The breath-taking part of it is that the smile is still forthcoming when the twopence is not; this is frightfully disturbing to one's nicely arranged opinions of the domestic class.

But it makes living in Madrid very agreeable.

Like the rest of their country, menservants, before they know you, are inclined to be suspicious, and polite only along circumscribed lines; but once they have accepted you, your position in their eyes is unimpeachable, and the service they will render has no limits. This standard of judgment of a very old country: the standard, throughout all classes, of judgment of the individual for what he proves himself to be, is extremely interesting as opposed to the instantaneous judgment and unquestioning acceptance of him as he outwardly appears to be, by the very young country of America. To the American, it is a disgrace to serve—or, at least, to admit that he is serving; to the Spaniard, it is a disgrace not to serve, with his utmost powers and grace, any one worthy of recognition whatsoever.

Wherefore Spanish maids and men are the most loyal and devoted the world over. They will run their feet off for you all day long, and sit up half the night too, if you will let them, finishing some task in which they are interested. When you are ill, they make the most thoughtful of nurses, never sparing themselves if it is to give you even a fractional amount of comfort. And for all your thanks, they return a deprecating "For nothing—for nothing." They have never heard of an "eight-hour day"; the Union of Domestic Labour would be to them a title in Chinese: yet they find life worth living. They

are even—breathe it not among the moderns!—contented; still more strange, they are considered, and whenever possible spared, by their unmodern masters and mistresses.

It is the civilization of an unpractical people; a people not in terror of giving something for nothing, but eager always to give more. They are, I believe, the one people to whom money—in the human relations of life—never occurs. And so, of course, they are despised by other peoples for their poverty, their lack of "push." Nowadays we worship the genius of Up-to-date: his marvellous invention; his lightning calculation and keen move; his sweating, struggling, superman's performance, day by day—and his final triumph. We disdain the old actor of mere grandiloquence, content to dream, passive in his corner.

Yet are his childishness and self-sufficiency, even his ignorance, so much meaner than the greed and sordidness and treachery of the demigod of to-day? And is the inexorable activity of the modern business-man so surely worth more than the attitude of the shabby old man who refused to sell brass for gold?

[Underwood & Underwood.

"THE RESTFUL SWEEP OF PARKS."

# "IN REVIEW" (LONDON)

## I

### THE CRITICS

COMING into London from Paris or New York, or even from Madrid, is like alighting from a brilliant panoramic railway on to solid, unpretentious mother earth. The massive bulk of bridges, the serene stateliness of ancient domes and spires, the restful green sweep of parks—unbroken by flower-beds or too many trees; the quiet leisure of the Mall, and the sedate brown palace overlooking it: all is tranquil, dignified, soothing. One leans against the cushions of one's beautifully luxurious taxi, and sighs profound contentment. Here is order, well-being, peace!

And yonder, typical of it all, as the *midinette* is typical of Paris and the *torero* of Spain, stands the imperturbable London "bobby." Already you have met his Southampton or Dover cousin on the pier; where the latter's calm, competent orders made the usual flurried transfer from boat to train a simple matter. Too, you have made acquaintance with

that policeman-in-embryo, the English porter. His brisk, capable answers : "Yes, sir! This way, please, sir. Seven-twenty at Victoria,—right, sir!" and his deft piloting of you and your luggage into the haven of an empty carriage — in these days of frenzied democracy, whence can one derive such exotic comfort as from a servant who acknowledges himself a servant, and performs his servant's duties to perfection?

I used to wonder why travelling in England is so much more agreeable than travelling in America, with all the conveniences the latter boasts. I think it is because, where America gives you things to make you comfortable, England gives you people— a host of them, well-trained and intent only on serving you. The personal contact makes all the difference, with one's flattered vanity. The policeman, the porter, the guard who finds one a seat, the boy who brings one a tea-basket, finally the chauffeur who drives one to an hotel, and the doorman who grasps one's bag; each and all tacitly insinuate that they exist to look out for oneself in particular, for all men in general. What wonder that Englishmen are snobs! Their universe revolves round them, is made for as well as by them; and what they want when they want it, is always within arm's reach. They are the inventors and perfectors of the Groove.

But no one can accuse them of being sybarites. Comfort, luxury, the elaborate service with which they insist on being surrounded, are only accessory to a root-idea which may even be called a passion: the producing of great men. To this, as to all great creation, routine is necessary; and the careful systematizing of life into classes and sub-classes, each with its special duties. English people actually love their duties, they are taught from childhood to love them, and to attend to them before everything. As reward, when work is finished, they are given home. This is odd to the foreigner—to whom duty is a dreary thing, to be avoided whenever possible; and home a place to leave, not to come back to. In consequence, the general summary of England is "dull."

English people are called dull—"heavy" is the more popular word, because they do not gather on street-corners or in *cafés*, arguing and gesticulating, but go methodically about their business; leaving the stranger to do the same. Of course, if the latter has no business, this is depressing. Here he is in an unknown country, with nothing to do but sight-see, which bores him infinitely. There is no one with whom to talk, no pleasant congregating-spot where he could at least look on at, if not share in, the life of the people. He is thrown dismally back upon himself for diversion. So what does he do?

He goes and sees the sights; which was his *duty* from the beginning. Just as he goes to bed at midnight, because every place except bed is closed to him; and to church on Sundays, because every building except church is shut. England not only expects every man to do his duty, she makes it practically impossible for him to do anything else; by which she shrewdly gains his maximum efficiency when and where she needs it.

In return, or rather in preparation, she gives him a remarkably fine groundwork, both mental and physical, to start with. No foreigner can fail to be impressed with the minute care and thought bestowed upon English children, and the sacrifices gladly made to secure their health and best development. In comparison with French and American and Spanish parents, the English mother and father may seem undemonstrative, even cold; they do not gush over their children in public, or take them out to restaurants, or permit them to share their own meals at home. Neither, however, do they give them the least comfortable rooms in the house, and decree that their wants and needs shall be second to those of the adult members of the family. The children have a routine of their own, constructed carefully for them, and studied to fit their changing requirements. They have their own rooms—as large and light and sunny as the parents can contrive—their

own meals, of wholesome food served at sensible hours; their fixed times for exercise and study alike: everything is planned to give them the best possible start for mind and body.

"But," the French or American mother objects, when one extols this system, "it takes so much money, so many rooms, so many servants,—two distinct households, in fact." It takes a different distribution of money, that is all. As the children are never on show, their clothes are simple; the clothes of the parents are apt to be simple too. Amusement is not sought outside the home in England as it is in other countries; both interest and money are centred within the house and garden that is each man's castle. This makes possible many comforts which people of other countries look upon as luxuries, but which to the English man and woman are the first necessities. And primary among these is a healthful, cheerful place to rear their children.

Not only the wealthy, but people in very modest circumstances insist upon this; and in houses of but six or seven rooms, one finds the largest and airiest given over to the day and night nurseries for the children. Fresh chintz and white paint and simple furniture make these the most attractive as well as the most sensible surroundings for the small people. Nurses, teachers, school-fellows, the whole chain of

influence linking the development of the English child, strengthens in him the idea of physical fitness as a first essential. And the idea is so early instilled, and so constantly and emphatically fostered, that it becomes the kernel of the grown man's activity. The stern creed that only the fit survives, rules England almost as it ruled old Sparta—a creed terrible for the weak, but splendid for the strong; and that has produced such men as Gordon, Rhodes, Kitchener, Curzon, and Roberts—and hundreds of others who are the fruit of this rigorous policy.

First the home, then the public schools teach it, uncompromisingly. At school, a boy must establish himself by his prowess in one direction or another. To gain a footing, and then to hold it, he must do something—row, or play cricket or football; but play, and play hard, he must. The other boys force him to it, whether he will or no; hardness is their religion, and those who do not conform to it are practically finished before they begin. The reputation won at school lays or permanently fails to lay the foundation of after success. "Hm . . . yes, I remember him at Eton," has summarized many a man's chances for promotion or failure. Rarely does he prove himself to be worth later more than he was worth then.

It is interesting to follow the primitive ideal—of bodily perfection—through this old and perhaps

most finely developed of all present civilizations. In the hurry-scurry of modern affairs, when other men pay little or no heed to preserving their bodily strength, never does this cease to be the first consideration of the Englishman. He wants money and position and power quite as keenly as other men want them; but he has ingrained in him the knowledge that to gain these things, then to enjoy them, sound nerves are necessary. His impulse is to store up energy always faster than he spends it, and not to waste himself on a series of trifles some one else can handle as well as, if not better than, he.

Hence the carefully ordered routine he follows from childhood; the systematic exercise, the frequent holidays his "strenuous" American cousin scoffs at. All are designed to keep him hard and fit, and ready for unexpected emergencies that may demand surplus strength. Middle-aged men play the games and follow the hobbies of young men; elderly men vie with the middle-aged. The fast and fixed lines that divide youth from maturity, in other countries, here are blurred by the hearty good comradeship of sport; in which all ages share alike.

Sport is *not* a hobby with Englishmen; it is the backbone of their creed. Therefore, I think, is it so hard for the foreigner to enter into the real sports spirit of England—because he never quite appreciates the serious motive behind it. With the French-

man and the American and the Spaniard, even with the Austrian, sport is recreation; they take it apart from the business of life, where the Englishman takes it as essential to life itself. By it he establishes and maintains his working efficiency, and without it he would have lost his chief tool, and his perennial remedy for whatever ills befall him.

It is easy to connect the ideal of bodily perfection with the ideal of race, that is responsible for the renowned snobbishness of English people. Some one has said that English society revolves round the King and the horse—or, as he might have added, round the supreme symbols of human and animal development. That towards which every one is striving—to breed finer and stronger creatures—is crystallized in these two superlative types. While from the King down, on the human side, the scale is divided into the most minute shades of gradation.

As government in England tends to become more and more democratic, society tends to become more aristocratic—as far as magnifying ancient names and privileges is concerned. "A title is always a title," said a practical American lady, "but an English title is just a bit better." It is, because English people think so, and have thought it so long and so emphatically that they have brought every one else to that opinion. The same is true of many English institutions, admirable in themselves but

which actually are admired because the English admire them. Every nation is more or less egoist, but none is so sincerely and consistently egoist as the English. They travel the earth, but they travel to observe and criticize; not to assimilate foreign things.

The American is a chameleon, taking on the habits and ideas of each place as he lives in it; Latins have not a little of this character too. But the Briton, wherever he goes, remains the Briton; you never mistake him, in Palestine or Alaska or the South Sea Islands; no matter where he is, he has brought his tea and his tub and his point of view with him. And though he may be one among thousands of another nationality, somehow these others become impressed with his traditions rather than he with theirs. Perhaps because away from home he calmly pursues the home routine, adjusting the life of his temporary habitation to himself, rather than himself to it.

If he is accustomed to dress for dinner, he dresses; though the rest of the company may appear in corduroys and neckerchiefs. And continues to dress, imperturbably, no matter how mercilessly he may be ridiculed or even despised. If he is accustomed to take tea at a certain hour, he takes it —in Brazil or Thibet, it makes no difference. And the same is true of his religious observance, his beloved

exercise, his hobbies and his study : of all these things he is too firmly convinced to change them by one jot. Such an attitude is bound to have its effect on those persistently confronted with it; resentment, then curiosity, finally a certain grudging respect is born in the minds of the people on whom the Englishman serenely forces his superiority. They wonder about his country—he never sounds its praises or urges them to visit it. He simply speaks with complete contentment of "going home."

When the foreigner, often out of sheer *pique*, follows him thither, he is met with the same indifference shown him in his own land. Visiting strangers may come or go : while they are in England, they are treated with civility ; when they choose to depart, they are not pressed to remain. This tranquil self-sufficiency is galling to the majority, who go away to sulk and to denounce the English as a race of "dull snobs." Yet they come back again—and again ; and continue to hammer at the door labelled "British Reserve," and to be snubbed, and to swallow their pride and begin anew, until finally they prise their way in by sheer obstinacy—and because no one cares very much, after all, whether they are in or not. London is so vast and so diverse, in its social ramifications, it can admit thousands of aliens a year and remain quite unconscious of them.

Americans in particular are quick to realize this, and out of their natural arrogance bitterly to resent it. At home, they explain rather piteously, they are "someone"; here, their money is accepted, but they themselves are despised—or at best, barely tolerated. They who are used to carry all before them, find themselves patronized, smiled at indulgently or, worst of all, ignored. In short, the inexperienced young actors come before an audience of seasoned critics, whom they cannot persuade to take them seriously. For they soon discover that there is no "bluffing" these calmly judicial people, but that merit alone—of one sort or another—succeeds with them.

They are not to be "impressed" by tales of reckless expenditure or intimate allusions to grand dukes and princesses seen on the promenades of Continental "cures." On the contrary, they are won over in no time by something the American would never think of using as a wedge: unaffected simplicity. But why should one want to win them —whether one be Amercian or French, Spanish, German, or any other self-respecting egoist-on-one's-own? Why does one always want to win the critical?

Because they set a standard. The English have set standards since ever they were at all; wise standards, foolish standards, some broad and finely

tolerant, others absurdly narrow and short-sighted. But always they live by strict established rule, to which they demand of themselves exacting conformity. Each class has its individual ten commands—as is possible where classes are so definitely graded and set apart; each man is born to obey the decalogue of his class—or to be destroyed. Practically limitless personal liberty is his, within the laws of his particular section of society; but let him once overstep these, and he soon finds himself in gaol—of one kind or another.

Foreigners feel all this, and respond to it; just as they respond to the French criterion of beauty, the American criterion of wealth. England for centuries has stood for the *précieux* of society, in the large significance of the term; before her unwavering ideal of race, other peoples voluntarily come to be judged for distinction, as they go to Paris to be judged for their artistic quality, to New York for their powers of accomplishment. To-day, more than ever, London confers the social diploma of the world; which makes it, of course, the world's Mecca and chief meeting-place.

This has changed the character of the conservative old city from a provincial insular capital into a great cosmopolitan centre. Necessarily it has leavened the traditional British self-satisfaction while that colossus slept; by the introduction of new

principles, new problems, new points of view. The critic remains the critic, but he must march with the times—or lose his station. And conservatism is a dotard, nowadays. Each new republic, as it comes along, shoves the old man a foot farther towards his grave. Expansion is the battle-cry of the present, and critics and actors alike must look alive, and modulate their voices to the chorus.

A bewildering babel of tunes is the natural result in this transition period, but many of them are fine and all are interesting. England lifts her voice to announce that she is not an island, but an Empire; and it is the fashion in London now to treat Colonials with civility, even actually to fête them. *Autres temps autres mœurs!* We have heard Mr. Bernard Shaw's anxious charwoman ask her famous daughter of the halls: "But what'll his duchess mother be thinkin' if the dook marries a ballyrina, with me for a mother-in-law?" And the answer: "Indeed, she says she's glad he'll have somebody to pay his income tax, when it goes to twenty shillings in the pound!"

The outcry against American peeresses and musical-comedy marchionesses has long since died into a murmur, and a feeble murmur at that. Since another astute playwright suggested that the race of Vere de Vere might be distinctly improved by the infusion of some healthy vulgar blood, and a

chin or two amongst them, the aristocratic gates have opened almost eagerly to receive these alien beauties. In politics, too, new blood is welcomed; as it is in the Church, in the universities, and even in that haughtiest of citadels, the county. The egoism of England is becoming a more practical egoism: she is beginning to see where she can use the things she has hitherto disdained, and is almost pathetically anxious to make up for lost time. But for ballast she has always her uncompromising standards, by which both things and people must be weighed and found good before being accepted.

In short, while the bugaboo of invasion and the more serious menace of socialism have grown up to lead pessimists to predict ruin for the country, subtler influences have been at work to make her greater than ever before. The signs of conflict are almost always hopeful signs; only stagnation spells ruin. And where once the English delighted to stagnate—or at least to sit within their insular shell and admire themselves without qualification—now they are looking keenly about, to acquire useful men and methods from every possible source. Finding, a bit to their own surprise, that rather than diminishing their prestige in the process, they are strengthening it.

The routine is being amplified, made to fit the spirit of the time, which is a spirit of progress above

all things. John Bull has evolved from a hard-riding, hard-drinking, provincial squire into a hard-thinking tactician with cosmopolitan tendencies and breadth of view. From London, as his reviewing-stand, he scrutinizes the nations as they pass; and his judgment—but that is for another chapter.

## II

### THE JUDGMENT

"Now learn what morals critics ought to show,
For 'tis but half a judge's task to know,"

says Pope, who himself was hopelessly immoral in the manufacture of couplets. And what two men ever held the same morals, anyhow? The personal equation is never more prominent than in the expression of the individual's "views," as nowadays ethics are dubbed. One may fancy oneself the most catholic of judges, yet one constantly betrays the hereditary prejudices that can be modified but never quite cast off.

I was recently with an Englishman at an outdoor variety theatre in Madrid. We sat restively through the miserable, third-rate performance, grumbling at each number as it proved worse than the last, and finally waxing positively indignant over the ear-splitting trills and outrageous contortions of the prima donna of the evening. "Still," said the Englishman suddenly, "she *has* had the energy to keep herself fit, and to come out here and do something. Really, she isn't so bad, you know, after all."

Before she had finished he was actually approving of her: her mere muscular soundness had conquered him, and her adherence to his elemental creed of "doing something," and doing it with all one's might. The artistic and the sentimental view-points, which the Englishman always wears self-consciously, slip away from him like gossamer when even the most indirect appeal is made to his fetish of physical fitness. In respect of this, he is by no means a snob, but a true democrat. One glimpse of an English meet proves it; for there you see his lordship, the squire, the parson, the butcher, the doctor, the schoolmaster, and the petty clerk gallop across the fields together, "and the best man among them is he with his head and his heart up, and his hands and heels down, and a good one under him." Such a mingling of classes on terms of hearty equality one sees in no other country. What other country is sufficiently sure of itself, in its various classes, to forget them and to judge by sportsmanship alone?

It is in New York, not London, that one hears severe discussion of A's charwoman grandmother, B's lady's-maid mother, C's father who deals in tinned beans. What London wants to know is what A, B, and C do, and how they do it. Snobbism turns its searchlight on the individual, not on his forbears; though to the individual it is merciless enough. In

consequence, the city has become a sort of international Athenæum, a clearing-ground for the theories, dreams, and fanaticisms of all men.

I remember being tremendously impressed at my very first London tea-party, by the respect and keen interest shown each of the various enthusiasts gathered there. A labour leader, a disciple of Buddhism, the founder of a new kind of dramatic school, a missionary from the Congo, and a post-impressionist painter: all were listened to, in turn, and their several hobbies received with lively sympathy. The labour leader got a good deal of counter-argument, the post-impressionist his share of good-humoured chaffing; but every one was given the floor, and a chance to beat his particular drum as hard as he liked, until the next came on. The essential thing, in London, is that one shall have a drum to beat; small talk, and the polite platitudes that sway the social reunions of New York and Paris, are relegated to the very youthful or the very dull. Nor is cleverness greeted with the raised eyebrow of dismay; people are not afraid, or too lazy, to think. One sees that in the newspapers, the books and plays, as well as in the drawing-room conversation of the English. The serious, even the so-called heavy topics, as well as the subtle, finely ironic, and sharply critical, are given place and attention; not by a few *précieux* alone, but by the

mass of the people. And not to be well-informed is to be out of the world, for both men and women.

Of course, there is the usual set of "smart" fashionables who delight in ignorance and whose languid energies are spent between clothes and the newest one-step. But these are no more typical of London society than they are of any other; though in the minds of many intelligent foreigners they have become so, through having their doings conspicuously chronicled in foreign newspapers and by undiscriminating visitors returning from England. On one point this confusion of English social sets is easily understood: they share the same moral leniency that permits all to lend themselves to situations and ideas which scandalized the foreigner.

It is not that as a people they are more vicious than any other, but they are franker in their vice; they have no fine shades. An American woman told me of the shock she received at her first English house-party, where her hostess—a friend of years, who had several times visited her in New York—knew scarcely one-half of her own guests. The rest were "friends," without whom nothing would induce certain ladies and gentlemen to come.

"It wasn't the *fact* of it," said the *Américaine* candidly; "of course, such things exist everywhere, but they aren't so baldly apparent and certainly they aren't discussed. Those people actually quarrelled

about the arrangement of rooms, and changed about with the most barefaced openness. My hostess and I were the only ones who didn't pair, and we were simply regarded as hypocrites without the courage of our desires."

All of which is perfectly true, and an everyday occurrence in English social life. The higher up the scale, the broader tolerance becomes. "Depend upon it," said a lady of the old régime, "God Almighty thinks twice before he condemns persons of quality!" And in England, mere human beings, to be on the safe side, do not condemn them at all. The middle class (the sentimentalists of every nation) lead a life of severe rectitude—and revel in the sins of their betters, which they invent if the latter have none. But directly a man is a gentleman, or a woman a lady, everything is allowable. Personal freedom within the class laws holds good among morals as among manners; and the result is rather horrifying to the stranger.

French people, for example, are far more shocked at the English than the English are at them. With the former, the offence is against good taste—always a worse crime, in Latin eyes, than any against mere ethics. The Englishman's unvarnished candour in airing his private affairs appears to the Latin as crass and unnecessary; while in the Englishwoman it becomes to him positively repellent. The difference

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LONDON, THE EMPIRE CAPITAL

throughout, in the two races, is the difference between the masculine and the feminine points of view. England is ever and always a man's country. Even the women look at things through the masculine vision, and to an extent share the masculine prerogatives. As long as a woman's husband accepts what she does, every one accepts her; which explains how in the country where women are clamouring most frantically for equal privileges, a great number of women enjoy privileges unheard of by their "free" sisters of other lands.

It is a question of position, not of sex; and harks back—moral privilege, I mean—to that core of all English institutions: breeding. There are no bounds to the latitude allowed the great, though it does not seem to occur to the non-great that such licence in itself brings into question the rights of many who hold old names and ancient titles. Succession, that all-important factor of the whole social system, is hedged about with many an interrogation point; which society is pleased to ignore, nevertheless, on the ground of *noblesse oblige!* Above a certain stratum, the English calmly dispense with logic, and bestow divine rights on all men alike; obviously it is the only thing to do, and besides it confers divine obligations at the same time.

One must say for all Englishmen, that rarely if ever in their personal liberty do they lose sight

of their obligations. In the midst of after-dinner hilarity, one will see a club-room empty as if by magic, and the members hurry away in taxis or their own limousines. One knows that a Division is to be called for, and that it wants perhaps ten minutes of the hour. The same thing happens at balls or almost any social function: the men never fail to attend when they can, for they are distinctly social creatures; but they keep a quiet eye on the clock, and slip out when duty calls them elsewhere. This serves two excellent purposes: of preventing brain-fag among the "big" men of the hour, and lending the zest of their interests and often great undertakings to society—which in many countries never sees them.

In England politics and society are far more closely allied than in America or on the Continent. Each takes colour from the other, and becomes more significant thereby. The fact of a person's being born to great wealth and position, instead of turning him into an idle spendthrift, precludes his taking an important part in the affairs of the country. The average English peer is about as hard-working a man as can be found, unless it be the King himself; and the average English hostess, far from being a butterfly of pleasure, has a round of duties as exacting as those of the Prime Minister. Through all the delightful superficial intercourse of a London

season there is an undercurrent of serious purpose, felt and shared by every one, though by each one differently.

At luncheons, dinners, garden-parties, and receptions, the talk veers sooner or later towards politics and national affairs. All "sets," the fashionable, the artistic, the sporting, the adventurous, as well as the politicians themselves, meet and become absorbed in last night's debate or the Bill to come up for its third reading to-morrow. By the way, for a foreigner to participate in these bouts of discussion, he must become addicted to the national habit: before going anywhere, he must read the *Times*.

As regularly as he takes his early cup of tea, every self-respecting Englishman after breakfast retires into a corner with the *Times*, and never emerges until he has masticated the last paragraph. Then and only then is he ready to go forth for the day, properly equipped to do battle. And he speedily discovers if you are not similarly prepared —and beats you. Of all the characteristic English things I can think of, none is so English as the *Times*. In it you find, besides full reports of political proceedings and the usual births, marriages, and deaths, letters from Englishmen all the way from Halifax to Singapore. Letters on the incapacity of American servants, the best method of breeding

Angora cats, the water system of the Javanese (have they any?), how to travel comfortably in Cochin-China, the abominable manners of German policemen, the dangers of eating lettuce in Palestine, etc. etc. Signals are raised to all Englishmen everywhere, warning them what to do and what to leave undone, and how they shall accomplish both. Column upon column of the conservative old newspaper is devoted to this sort of correspondence club, which has for its motto that English classic: prevention, to avoid necessity for cure.

The Englishman at home reads it all carefully, together with the answers to the correspondents of yesterday, the interminable speech of Lord X. in the Upper House last night, the latest bulletins concerning the health of the Duchess of Y. It is solid, unsensational mental food, and he digests it thoroughly; storing it away for practical future use. But the foreigner, accustomed to the high seasoning of journalistic epigram and the tang of scandal, finds it very dull. Unfortunately, the mission of the newspaper in most countries has become the promoting of a certain group of men, or a certain party, or a certain cause, and the damning of every other man, or party, or cause that stands in the way. The English press has none of this flavour. It is imbued with the national instinct for fair-play, which, while it by no means

prohibits lively discussion of men and measures, remains strictly impersonal in its attitude of attack.

The critic on the whole is inclined to deserve his title as it was originally defined: one who judges impartially, according to merit. He is a critic of affairs, however, rather than of art. He lives too much in the open to give himself extensively to artistic study or creation. And Englishmen have, generally speaking, distinguished themselves as fighters, explorers, soldiers of fortune, and as organizers and statesmen, rather than as musicians, painters, and men of letters.

Especially in the present day is this true. There are the Scotts and Shackletons, the Kitcheners, Roberts, and Curzons; but where are the Merediths, Brownings, Turners, and Gainsboroughs? Literature is rather better off than the other arts—there is an occasional Wells or Bennett among the host of the merely talented and painstaking; more than an occasional novelist among the host of fictioneers. But poets are few and uneventful, playwrights more abundant, though tinged with the charlatanism of the age; while as for the painters, sculptors, and composers, in other countries the protagonists of the peculiar violence and revolution of to-day—in England, who are they?

We go to exhibitions by the dozen during the season, and listen conscientiously to the latest tenor;

but seldom do we see art or hear music. In the past, the great English artists have been those who painted portraits, landscapes, or animals; reproducing out of experience the men and women, horses, dogs, and out-of-doors they knew so well; rather than creating out of imagination dramatic scenes and pictures of the struggle and splendour of life. Their art has been a peaceful art, the complement rather than the mirror of the heroic militancy that always has dominated English activity. Similarly, the musicians—the few that have existed—have surpassed in compositions of the sober, stately order: oratorios, chorals, hymns, and solemn marches. Obviously, peace and solemnity are incongruous with the restless, rushing spirit of to-day; to which the Englishman is victim together with all men, but which, with his slower articulation, he is not able to express on canvas or in chromatics.

Cubism terrifies him; on the other hand he is, for the moment at least, insanely intrigued by ragtime. The hoary ballad, which "Mr. Percy Periwell will sing this day at Southsea pier," is giving way at last to syncopated ditties which form a mere accompaniment to the reigning passion for jigging. No one has time to listen to singing; every one must keep moving, as fast and furiously as he can. There is a spice of tragi-comedy in watching the mad wave hit sedate old London, sweeping her off her feet and

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into a maze of frantically *risqué* contortions. Court edicts, the indignation of conservative dowagers, the severity of bishops and the press—nothing can stop her; from Cabinet ministers to housemaids, from débutantes to duchesses, "everybody's doing it," with vim if not with grace. And such is the craze for dancing, morning, noon, and night, that every other room one enters has the aspect of a *salle de bal*—chairs and sofas stiff against the walls, a piano at one end, and for the rest, shining parquetry.

Looking in at one of these desecrated drawing-rooms, where at the moment a peer of the realm was teaching a marchioness to turkey-trot, a lady of the old order wished to know "What, *what* would Queen Victoria say?"

"Madam," replied her escort, also of the epoch of square dances and the genteel crinoline, "the late queen was above all things else a gentlewoman. She had no language with which to describe the present civilization!"

It is not a pretty civilization, surely; it is in many ways a profane one. Yet in its very profanities there is a force, a tremendous and splendid vitality, that in the essence of it must bring about unheard-of and glorious things. Our sentimentalism rebels against motor-buses in Park Lane, honking taxis that are exterminating the discreet hansom of more leisurely years; we await with mingled awe

and horror the day, just dawning, when the sky itself will be cluttered with whizzing, whirring vehicles. But give us the chance to go back and be rid of these things—who would do it?

As a matter of fact, we have long since crossed from the sentimental to the practical. We are desperately, fanatically practical in these days; we want all we can get, and as an afterthought hope that it will benefit us when we get it. England has caught the spirit less rabidly than many of the nations, but she has caught it. No longer does she smile superciliously at her colonies; she wants all that they can give her. Far from ignoring them, she is using every scheme to get in touch; witness the Island Site and the Colonial Offices fast going up on that great tract of land beyond Kingsway. No longer does she sniff at her American cousins, but anxiously looks to their support in the slack summer season, and has everything marked with dollar signs beforehand! Since the *Entente cordiale*, too, she throws wide her doors to her neighbours from over the Channel; let every one come who will help the old island kingdom to its new ideal of a great Empire federation.

Doctor Johnson's assertion that "all foreigners are mostly fools" may have been the attitude of Dr. Johnson's day; it is out-of-date in the present. English standards are as exacting, English judg-

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LINKING THE NEW ERA AND THE OLD.

ments as strict, as ever they were; but to those who measure up to them, whatever their race or history, prompt and generous appreciation is given. While, if he chooses in some way actively to serve the country, a man may be a Zulu or a Hottentot: the best of rank and wealth that the world can offer are his for his labour. And I know of no land where the reformer, the scientist, the philosopher—the man with a message of whatever kind—is given fairer hearing or more just reward, always provided his wares are trade-marked genuine.

"Nonsense of enthusiasts is very different from nonsense of ninnies" was the conclusion of one of the wisest Englishmen who ever lived; and the critical country has adopted it as a slogan, writing on the reverse side of the banner: "Freedom and fair-play for all men."

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